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RISE OF THE CHRISTIAN POWER IN INDIA

BY

Major B. D. BASU, I. M. S.

SECOND EDITION.

With 4 Maps and 58 Plates
one in colours

R. CHATTERJEE

CALCUTTA

1931

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Dedicated

to

The Beloved Memories

of those

without whose inspiration,

encouragement and help,

this work

could not have been written.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The publication of the Second Edition of the *Rise of the Christian Power in India* would have given the Publisher unalloyed pleasure, if its distinguished Author had lived o see it in the hands of the public. But unhappily he died unexpectedly before even half the book had been printed, leaving all those who knew him and his work in different fields of knowledge to mourn his loss.

In spite of failing eyesight the Author had revised the book for this edition before sending it to the press. He omitted some passages which were superfluous or were mere repetitions. The chapter on colonization of India by Europeans was omitted because, after the publication of the first edition of this work, the Author had published a separate book devoted to that subject. Additions were made here and there to make the book more complete. Some mistakes in the statement of facts and in dates, etc., have been corrected.

In the present edition the book has been profusely illustrated, and some maps have been inserted. In the first edition in five volumes there was no index. A somewhat elaborate index has been added to this edition. All these, it is hoped, will add to the attraction and usefulness of the work.

Though, on account of the revision, the additions to the text, the illustrations, the maps and the index, the book is altogether larger and more satisfactory than when originally published, the price has been reduced from Rs. 25 to Rs. 15. The Publisher trusts that this reduction in price will bring the book within the reach of a wider circle of readers than before.

OCTOBER, 1931 THE PUBLISHER

CONTENTS

Page

PREFACE—I. Materials for the History of British India—II. Fallacies and Problems—III. The Christian Power—IV. Miscellaneous Observations ... *1-16*

INTRODUCTION—I. Struggle of different Christian Nations for Supremacy in India—II. The discovery of the sea-route to India by Europeans—III. The Portuguese in India—IV. The Danes in India—V. The Dutch in India—VI. The English in India—VII. The French in India—VIII. Why the English succeeded—IX. German enterprise in India—X. Flemish enterprise in Bengal—XI. Why the British Dominion took its rise from Bengal. ... 17-43

CHAPTER I
Shiraj-ud-daula—Commencement of hostilities—Capture of Calcutta—The Nawab's return to 'his capital—Proceedings of the English—Treaty of Alinagar—Capture of Chandernagar—Conspiracy against the Nawab—The Battle of Plassey—Death of Shiraj ... 44-100

CHAPTER II
Mir Jafar and his rule—Second Revolution in Bengal ... 101-127

CHAPTER III
Mir Kasim and his rule—Appendix—The War with Mir Kasim—The last days of Mir Kasim ... 128-167

CHAPTER IV
Restoration of Mir Jafar—The Court of Directors on the inland trade—Shah Shuja's war with the English—The last days of Mir Jafar ... 168-180

CHAPTER V
Events succeeding Mir Jafar's death ... 181-189

CHAPTER VI
The last days of Clive in India—Economic condition of Bengal ... 190-195

CHAPTER VII
The administration of Warren Hastings ... 196-202

CHAPTER VIII
The Rise of the Marathas and the First Maratha War—Rise of the Marathas—Causes of the First Maratha War—Prospects of the First Maratha War ... 203-235

CHAPTER IX
The Rise of the Oudh Principality ... 236-239

CHAPTER X
Hyder Ali ... 240-250

CHAPTER XI
The Rise of the Nizam's Dynasty ... 251-260

CHAPTER XII
Sir John Macpherson as officiating Governor-General of India ... 261-264

CHAPTER XIII
Lord Cornwallis' Administration ... 265-283

CHAPTER XIV
Sir John Shore's Administration ... 284-302

CHAPTER XV
The Marquess of Wellesley's Administration—his appointment as Governor-General of India 303-310

CHAPTER XVI
Lord Mornington's treatment of the Nizam ... 311-322

CHAPTER XVII
The Second War with Tipu ... 323-334

CHAPTER XVIII
Wellesley's treatment of the Nawab Vazir of Oudh ... 335-342

CHAPTER XIX
Marquess Wellesley's treatment of Nawab of Arcot ... 343-350

CHAPTER XX
Annexation of Tanjore—Appendix ... 351-357

CHAPTER XXI
Annexation of Surat ... 358-360

CHAPTER XIX
Marquess Wellesley's Treatment of the Nawab of Arcot ... 343-350

CHAPTER XX
Annexation of Zanjore ... 351-357

CHAPTER XXI
Annexation of Surat ... 358-360

Page

CHAPTER XXII
How the Marquess Wellesley ensnared the Peshwa ... 361-390

CHAPTER XXIII
The Treaty of Bassein and the return of the Peshwa to Puna ... 391-404

CHARTER XXIV
Second Maratha War—its genesis and alleged causes ... 405-434

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXIV
Sir Philip Francis on the Maratha War ... 435-438

CHAPTER XXV
Campaign of Intrigues and Conspiracies against Sindhia ... 439-455

CHAPTER XXVI
Commencement and Progress of the War—The Battle of Assaye ... 456-465

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXVI
The Field of Assaye ... 465-467

CHAPTER XXVII
Operations after the Battle of Assaye ... 468-476

CHAPTER XXVIII
The War in Guzerat ... 477-480

CHAPTER XXIX
The War in Orissa ... 481-487

CHAPTER XXX
Acquisition of Bundelkhand ... 488

CHAPTER XXXI
The War in the North ... 489-497

CHAPTER XXXII
The end of the War with the Confederates ... 498-499

CHAPTER XXXIII
The War with Holkar ... 500-520

CHAPTER XXXIV
The progress of the War with Holkar and humiliation of the British ... 521-530

CHAPTER XXXV
Situation of affairs and conspiracies and intrigues against Holkar ... 531-544

CHAPTER XXXVI
Holkar's movements ... 545-551

CHAPTER XXXVII
The siege of Bharatpur ... 552-567

CHAPTER XXXVIII
The last days of the Marquess Wellesley in India ... 568-571

CHAPTER XXXIX
Lord Cornwallis' second Indian Administration ... 572-576

CHAPTER XL
Sir George Barlow's Administration ... 577-583

CHAPTER XLI
The Mutiny at Vellore ... 584-586

CHAPTER XLII
The first Lord Minto's Administration ... 587-620

CHAPTER XLIII
The Mutiny at Madras ... 621-623

CHAPTER XLIV
The Marquess of Hastings's administration ... 624-627

CHAPTER XLV
Reflections on the E. I. Co.'s Charter of 1813 ... 628-632

CHAPTER XLVI
The Nepal War—I. Its Causes ... 633-636

CHAPTER XLVII
The Nepal War—II. The First Campaign ... 637-648

Page

CHAPTER XLVIII
The Nepal War—The Second Campaign ... 649-651

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XLVIII ... 651-652

CHAPTER XLIX
Treaty with Cutch ... 653

CHAPTER L
The Pindari War ... 654-659

CHAPTER LI
The Pindari War (contd.) ... 660-667

CHAPTER LII
The War with the Jat Princes ... 668-669

CHAPTER LIII
The War with the Maratha Princes ... 670

CHAPTER LIV
The last of the Peshwas ... 671-700

CHAPTER LV
Appa Saheb, the Raja of Nagpur ... 701-724

CHAPTER LVI
The War with Holkar ... 725-726

CHAPTER LVII
The end of the Third Maratha War ... 727-728

CHAPTER LVIII
The Marquess of Hastings and the Nawab of Oudh ... 729-730

CHAPTER LIX
Political aspect of the Marquess Hastings' Administration ... 731-736

CHAPTER LX
Recall of the Marquess of Hastings ... 737

CHAPTER LXI
The Administration of Lord Amherst ... 738

CHAPTER LXII
The First Burmese War ... 739-755

CHAPTER LXIII
The Barrackpore Massacre ... 756-763

CHAPTER LXIV
The termination of the Burmese War ... 764-766

CHAPTER LXV
The reduction of Bharatpur ... 767-770

CHAPTER LXVI
Amherst's visit to Delhi ... 771-772

CHAPTER LXVII
Lord William Bentinck's Administration ... 773-793

CHAPTER LXVIII
Reflections on the East India Company's Charter of 1833—I. Peace—II. Finance—III. Material improvements—IV. Condition of the people—V. Law and Justice—VI. Police—VII. Education—VIII. Public employment of the natives—IX. Popular contentment—X. Home Control ... 794-801

CHAPTER LXIX
Macaulay in India ... 802—807

CHAPTER LXX
Sir Charles Metcalfe's Administration ... 808

CHAPTER LXXI
Lord Auckland's Administration ... 809-823

CHAPTER LXII
Lord Ellenborough's Administration ... 824-832

CHAPTER LXXIII
The Annexation of Sindh ... 833-840

Page

CHAPTER LXXIV
Ellenborough's treatment of Sindhia ... 841-851

CHAPTER LXXV
Annexation of Kythal ... 852

CHAPTER LXXVI
Intrigues against the Panjab ... 853-857

CHAPTER LXXVII
Other Acts of Ellenborough ... 858-860

CHAPTER LXXVIII
Recall of Ellenborough ... 861-862

CHAPTER LXXIX
Lord Hardinge's Administration ... 863-873

CHAPTER LXXX
The Sikhs cross the Satlaj—The First Sikh War ... 874-881

CHAPTER LXXXI
The Sikh Raj loses its Independence ... 882-884

CHAPTER LXXXII
Hardinge's treatment of Raja Pratap Sing ... 885-886

CHAPTER LXXXIII
Lord Dalhousie's Administration ... 887-907

CHAPTER LXXXIV
Annexation of the Panjab ... 908-912

CHAPTER LXXXV
The Second Burmese War ... 913-925

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER LXXXIV
Cobden on annexation of Burma ... 926

CHAPTER LXXXVI
Dalhousie's acquisitions by fraud ... 927-928

CHAPTER LXXXVII
Annexation of Satara ... 929-931

CHAPTER LXXXVIII
Annexation of Nagpur ... 932-936

CHAPTER LXXXIX
Annexation of Jhansi ... 937-939

CHAPTER XC
Other Anexations by Lapse ... 940-941

CHAPTER XCI
Cofiscation of Berar ... 942-944

CHAPTER XCII
Annexation of Oudh ... 945-949

CHAPTER XCIII
Reflections on the Company's Charter of 1853 ... 950-951

CHAPTER XCIV
The Indian Mutiny of 1857 ... 952-961

CHAPTER XCV
The Transfer of the Government of India from the Company to the Crown ... 962-963

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XCV
Petition of the East India Company ... 964-971

CHAPTER XCVI
The Proclamation of Queen Victoria ... 972-973

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XCVI
Proclamation by the Queen in Council to the Princes, Chiefs, and the People of India... 974-975

CHAPTER XCVII
The End of the Company's Rule ... 976-977

BIBLIOGRAPHY ... 978-984

PERIODICALS,JOURNALS, Etc. ... 984

INDEX ... 985—

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

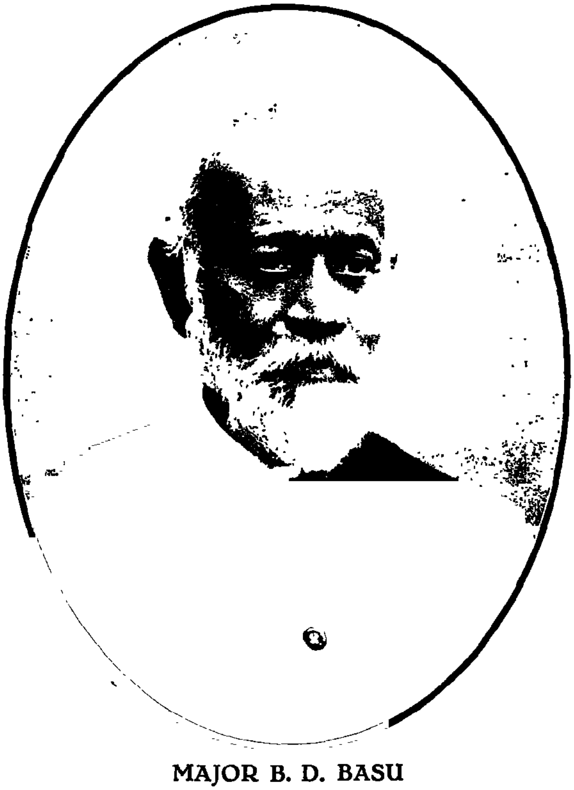
1.	Shivaji *in colours*		Frontisprice
2.	B. D. Basu	...	Page 1
3.	Vasco Da Gama	...	16
4.	San Gabriel	...	16
5,	Alfonso De Albuquerque	...	16
6.	General view of Surat	...	24
7.	General view of Madras	...	24
8.	Vasco Da Gama and the Zamorin of Calicut	...	28
9.	Dupleix	...	32
10.	Labourdonnais	...	32
11.	Sambhaji, son of Shivaji	...	36
12.	Sir Thomas Roe at the Court of Jehangir	...	36
13.	Nawab Aliverdi Khan	...	36
14.	Mohammad Ali Khan, Nawab of Carnatic	...	40
15.	The Royal Palace of Arcot	...	40
16.	Nawab Shiraj-ud-daula	...	44
17.	Old Fort William Calcutta,	...	56
18.	View of Old Calcutta	...	56
19.	J. Z. Holwell	...	60
20.	Lord Clive	...	64
21.	Admiral Watson	...	78
22.	Mr. Watts concluding the Treaty with Mir Jafar and his son Miran		90
23.	Battlefield of Plassey	...	92
24.	Mir Kasim	...	128
25.	Monghyr, view within the Fort	...	128
26.	The Emperor Shah Alam	...	184
27.	The Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, acquired by the English		186
28.	Raja Chait Singh of Benares	...	200
29.	Holwell Memorial, 1790	...	200
30.	Nana Fadnavis	...	212
31.	Raghunath Rao	...	212
32.	Warren Hastings	...	212
33.	Nawab Sadat Ali Khan	...	236
34.	Nawab Asifudullah Bahadur	...	236
35.	Nawab Mansoor Ali Khan	...	236
36.	Vazir Gaziudin Hyder	...	236
37.	Tipoo Sultan	...	240
38.	Hydar Ali	...	240
39.	Narain Rao Peshwa	...	240
40	Lord Cornwallis	...	280
41.	Sir David Baird	...	280
42.	Sir John Shore	...	280
43.	Begum Samru	...	288
44.	Jaswant Rao Holkar	...	288
45.	Mahadji Sindhia	...	288

			page
46.	Maharani Ahalyabai	...	288
47.	Marquis of Wellesley	...	304
48.	William Carey	...	304
49.	Wellington	...	320
50.	Sir Thomas Munro	...	320
51.	Seringapatam	...	320
52.	The Storming of Seringapatam	...	328
53.	The Last Stand of Tipu Sultan	...	332
54.	Dowlat Rao Sindhia	...	392
55.	Fortress of Gwalior	...	392
56.	Plan of Laswari	...	496
57.	De Boigne	...	588
58.	George Thomas	...	588
59.	Earl of Minto	...	588
60.	Sir Philip Francis	...	588
61.	The Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone	...	616
62.	Sir John Malcolm	...	616
63.	Old Bombay	...	616
64.	General Ochterloney	...	640
65.	Battle of Udhanala	...	640
66.	Baji Rao, the last of the Peshwas	...	684
67.	Malhar Rao Holkar	...	684
68.	Bapoo Goklah (Bapu Gokhale)	...	696
69.	Gangadhar Shastri	...	708
70.	Appa Saheb Bhonsle	...	708
71.	Fort of Talneer	...	708
72.	Armour worn by Maha Bandoola	...	752
73.	Maha Bandoola	...	752
74.	William Pitt, Lord Amherst	...	752
75.	Long-necked Bastion, Bharatpur	...	764
76.	Combermere, Bharatpur	...	764
77.	Right Hon. Charles T. Baron Metcalfe	...	772
78.	Rammohan Roy	...	772
79.	Lord Macaulay	...	772
80.	Lord William Cavendish Bentinck	...	772
81.	Mohan Lal	...	812
82.	Revd. C. F. Swartz	...	812
83.	General, the Earl of Moira	...	812
84.	Right. Hon. George, Earl of Auckland	...	816
85.	Sir Alexander Burnes, in the costume of Bokhara	...	816
86.	Assassination of Sir Alexander Burnes at Kabul	...	820
87.	Shah Shujah-ul-Moolk	...	824
88.	Sir W. H. Macnaghten	...	824
89.	Dost Mahomed Khan	...	824
90.	Amir Rustam Khan of Sindh	...	840
91.	Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Napier	...	840
92.	Amir Nasir Khan of Sindh and Sons	...	840
93.	Maharaja Ranjit Singh	...	856
94.	The Koh-i-Noor or Mountain of Light	...	856
95.	Maharaja Dalip Singh	...	856
96.	Gholab Singh	...	864

			page
97.	Lieut.-General Lord Gough	...	872
98.	Viscount Hardinge	...	872
99.	Raja Pratap Singh of Satara	...	872
100.	Sir Henry Lawrence	...	888
101.	The Battle of Chilianwala	...	904
102.	Battle of Gujrat	...	908
103.	Laxmibai, Rani of Jhansi	...	936
104.	Nana Saheb	...	936
105.	Akbar Khan	...	940
106.	Lord Canning	...	940
107.	Bahadur Shah II., last of the Moghuls	...	940
108.	Wajid Ali Shah	...	944
109.	Suja-ud-Dowlah and his ten sons	...	944
110.	Sir John Lawrence	...	952
111.	General Sir James Outram	...	952
112.	Lord Dalhousie	...	952
113.	Alex. Duff	...	952
114.	Old Delhi	...	956
115.	General Outram at the Durbar of the Raja of Travancore	...	960
116.	Iswarchandra Vidyasagar	...	964
117.	Drinkwater Bethune	...	964
118.	The East India House	...	976
119.	The Court of Directors, East India House	...	976
120.	The Court of Proprietors, East India House	...	976

LIST OF MAPS

1.	India about	...	1760	...	108
2.	... ...	...	1784	...	264
3.	... ...	...	1805	...	544
4.	... ...	...	1857	...	948



MAJOR B. D. BASU
Last Photograph taken during his life-time

PREFACE

I. Materials for the History of British India

"History must from time to time be rewritten, not because many new facts have been discovered, but because new aspects come into view, because the participant in the progress of an age is led to standpoints from which the past can be regarded and judged in a novel manner."—Goethe.

"History, so far, has been the most immoral and perverting branch of literature. It exalts greed and wholesale murder, when greedy and murderous lusts are satisfied in the names of nations. Fraud is taken as evidence of clever diplomacy. What is counted immoral down below is held admirable in Courts and on Thrones."—M. Hervé.

"History is not mainly a science which proceeds by analysis; it is the attempt to collect and arrange in a living picture an enormous mass of details. Too rigid definitions, like lines which are too hard and marked, spoil the total effect."

—Merz's History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. I, p. 5.

"I have learnt that in mathematics we have to rely on genius, in physics on experiment, in law, human and divine, on authority, IN HISTORY, ON TESTIMONY."—Leibnitz.

"We must try to separate fiction from falsification, and strain our gaze so as to recognise the lineaments of truth liberated from those retouchings. The removal of the fabulous, the destruction of what is deceiving, may satisfy the critic; he only desires to expose a deceptive story.........The historian, however, requires something positive; he must discover at least some probable connection and put a more plausible narrative in the place of that which he has had to sacrifice to his conviction."—Niebuhr.

A good historian should consult authors who have spoken of events, the archives in which unpublished documents are found, newspapers, private letters, memoirs and even tradition. He has to gather probablities from every source and then compare these probabilities, and weigh and discuss them before deciding. Unfortunately, India does not possess a reliable history of her past or even of modern times. It is not necessary to refer to the period of remote antiquity. During the British period of her existence, India has not produced any one who would take the trouble of writing a true history of her past and present.* To expect a true and reliable history of India from the natives of England is almost an impossibility.† This is not to be wondered at. "Politics and history," wrote the learned Professor Sir J. A. Seeley, "are only different aspects of

* Regarding the want of a proper history of Ireland, Lecky writes:

"That proportion of the national talent and scholarship which ought in every country to be devoted to elucidating the national history, has in Ireland not been so employed......Irish history is shamefully chaotic, undigested, and unelaborated and it presents in this respect a most humiliating contrast to the history of Scotland. The explanation is very obvious. For a long period the classes who possessed almost a monopoly of education and wealth, regarded themselves as a garrison in a foreign and a conquered country....... The highest literary talent was accordingly diverted to other channels, and Irish history has passed to a lamentable extent into the hands of religious polemics, of dishonest partisans, and of half-educated and uncritical enthusiasts."

—Lecky's History of England, second edition, Vol. II, (1879), page 288.

† "Each nation, in the main, writes its own history best; it best knows its own land, its own institutions, the relative importance of its own events, the characters of its own great men. But each nation has its peculiarities of view, its prejudices, its self-love, which require to be corrected by the impartial or even hostile view of others."

—Goldwin Smith's Lectures on the Study of History, 2nd edition, pp. 37-38.

"History cannot furnish its own inductive law. An induction, to be sound, must take in, actually or virtually, all the facts before her. What is past she knows in part; what is to come she knows not, and can never know. The scroll from which she reads is but half unrolled: and what the other half contains, what even the next line contains, no one has yet been able to foretell."—Ibid., p. 56.

"If all mankind were one State, with one set of customs, one literature, one code of laws, and this State became corrupted, what remedy, what redemption would there be? None but a convulsion which would rend the frame of society to pieces, and deeply injure the moral life which society is designed to guard. Not only so, but the very idea of political improvement might be lost, and all the world might become more dead than China. Nations redeem each other. They preserve for each other principles, truths, hopes, aspirations, which, committed to the keeping of one nation only, might, as frailty and error are conditions of man's being, become extinct for ever. They not

the same study."* The habits of thought of the natives of England have been mainly formed by political life. Hence the observations of Lecky are exactly to the point. In his work on Rationalism in Europe, Lecky writes:

"The object of the politician is expediency......A disinterested love of truth can hardly co-exist with a strong political spirit. In all countries where the habits of thought have been mainly formed by political life, we may discover a disposition to make expediency the test of truth."

The histories of India written by Englishmen are one-sided and not reliable. It could not have been otherwise. For, a true historian should be a philosopher, which the English are not.

"The object," writes Lecky, "of the philosopher is truth;.....Nothing can be more fatal in politics than a preponderance of the philosophical spirit......It is probable that the capacity for pursuing abstract truth for its own sake, which has given German thinkers so great an ascendancy in Europe, is in no slight degree to be attributed to the political languor of their nation."

If the English were to turn philosophers, then the political languor of their nation would set in. Even their greatest philosopher, Herbert Spencer, whom John Stuart Mill styled "the boldest thinker that English speculation has yet produced," was not free from the bias of political spirit. This has been proved to demonstration by the late American socialist writer, Henry George, in his work, named "A perplexed philosopher." It is not politically expedient and it is not to their interest that Englishmen should write a true account of the history of India. It is unfortunate also that Indians have not written any complete history of their country.

English authors have spread erroneous views of Indian history, have told their tale very prettily, and in a way which pleases the taste of their countrymen and countrywomen, and that class of readers have accepted it, true or false. It is, therefore, that Indian authors have an uphill fight to wage, for they have to champion truth against falsehood.

But the difficulties of the Indian historian of the British period are much increased by the fact that most of the political events and transactions of that period have been described by Englishmen. "It has become almost a proverb," writes Freeman,

"that no two eye-witnesses describe the same event in exactly the same way." †

......A very little thought will bring any of you to see that absolute certainty is unattainable by the very best historical evidence. Be the witness who he may, there is always the possibility both of error and of falsehood......The geologist may err in interpreting the witness of the rocks; but the rocks themselves can neither err nor lie. Now, not only may the historian err in

only raise each other again when fallen, they save each other from falling. They support each other's steps by sympathy and example; they moderate each other's excesses and extravagances and keep them short of the fatal point by the mutual action of opinion, when the action of opinion is not shut out by despotic folly." Ibid., p. 71.

"History is a series of struggles to elevate the character of humanity in all its aspects, religious, intellectual, social, political, rising sometimes to an agony of aspiration and exertion, and frequently followed by lassitude and relapse, as great moral efforts are in the case of individual men. Those who espouse the theory of necessary developments as the key to history are driven to strange consequences." Ibid., p. 95.

* Professor Goldwin Smith, as quoted by Freeman, also considered "history but past politics, and that politics are but present history." Freeman's Methods of Historical Study, page 8.
Hence the people reared on politics very often make "history the prostitute of politics."

† EYE WITNESSES NOT ALWAYS TRUSTWORTHY.

"My faith in historical narrative, founded in anything else than personal observation, has been greatly shaken by the numerous instances in which, during the present campaigns, anecdotes apparently trustworthy, have subsequently appeared untrue. The information I collected, to add to my own observation of the events just narrated, did not always bear sifting and several particulars were given me by eye-witnesses, who had the best opportunities of watching the course of events, which an examination of the ground convinced me were erroneous. In these moments of intense interest and excitement, the imagination has undue sway, and gaps are filled up by suppositions adopted merely for their plausibility and convenience, till it is difficult to separate fact from fiction, and the whole assumes the coherent and circumstantial air of perfect truth...."

—From Hamley's Campaign of Sebastopol, 1855.

interpreting the witness of records, but the records themselves may either err or lie...* We cannot be sure of the past, because its evidence depends on the human will to fix what shall be said to have happened."

Imagine the difficulties then of the historian who has to sift truth from a mass of records written by men of a race and creed who, having been nurtured on politics, define history to be "past politics" and, therefore, are not guided by "a disinterested love of truth" in writing history, for if not they themselves, at least their friends, relatives and predecessors, played a conspicuous part in the "past politics" of India.†

The historian must not be only a mere chronicler of facts and events and make his mind simply the mirror of reality, but he should possess the qualifications of a philosopher and scientist. He should observe and record facts, and also try to explain them. Like a scientist, he should attempt the classification, generalization and explanation of facts and endeavour to detect in past events the expression of general

---

* The following opinion of the late Professor Huxley, showing the reason why history cannot rank as a science, should be borne in mind by all those who read Indian history written by British authors. British writers of Indian history not only lack in sympathy with, but being ignorant also of the customs, manners and languages of the natives of India, cannot fully understand their social institutions and do justice to their motives and comprehend their peculiar situations. Consequently works on Indian History written by them are not trustworthy.

"For the most part, we learn history from the colorless compendiums or partisan briefs of mere scholars, who have too little acquaintance with practical life, and too little insight into speculative problems to understand that about which they write. In historical science, as in all sciences which have to do with concrete phenomena, laboratory practice is indispensable, and the laboratory practice of historical science is afforded, on the one hand, by active social and political life, and on the other, by the study of those tendencies and operations of the mind which embody themselves in philosophical and theological systems. Thucydides and Tacitus, and, to come nearer our own time, Hume and Grote, were men of affairs, and had acquired, by direct contact with social and political history in the making, the secret of understanding how such history is made."

—Huxley's article on Scientific and Pseudo-scientific Realism in the *Nineteenth Century* for February, 1887.

† "I believe it was a French King who, wishing to consult some historical work called to his librarian :—'Bring me my liar.' The characterization was startling but not undeserved. The more we look round at the world's affairs and the statements made about them by this or that class of people, the more we are impressed by the difficulty, and in some cases the impossibility, of getting at the essential facts.

"What must we think about historical statements at large? When twelve of England's chief newspapers, representing all parties, joined in a chorus of condemnation—when no newspaper was found which failed thus to join in reprobating the South (United States)—a conclusive proof of sympathetic feeling with the North was given. Yet in the North this conclusive proof was followed by diatribes against our assumed sympathy with the South. If this extreme perversion was possible in the days of a cheap Press and easy communication, what was not possible in past days when the means of spreading information were smaller and the hatreds greater? Beyond accounts of kings' reigns, of battles, and of incidents named in the chronicles of all the nations concerned, we have nothing to depend on but treaties made to be broken, despatches of corrupt and lying officials, gossiping letters of courtiers and so forth. How from these materials shall we distil the truth?......" —Herbert Spencer's Facts and Comments.

"Had the facts of History been like the phenomena of the physical world—had it been possible to approach the study of human nature with minds unprejudiced by passion or by sentiment—these venial tendencies to error would have soon corrected themselves. There would have been nothing to gain by misrepresentation, whether wilful or unconscious, and both writers and readers would have learnt to prefer truth to fiction. They were far advanced on the right road, and they had only to follow out completely the method on which they had begun, and imagination would have been reduced to its proper function of apprehending and realising the varieties of character and circumstances on which the correct delineation of actions and events depend."—Froude.

Again to quote the same author :—

"We are as far as ever from forming impartial judgments, and facts partially stated are not facts at all......

"But for the present I object to all historical theories. I object to them as calculated to vitiate the observation of facts without which such speculations are not worth the paper on which they are written. I said at the beginning that neither history, nor any other knowledge, could be obtained except by scientific methods.........A surface which is perfectly smooth renders back line for line the forms reflected on it; but what kind of notion should we have of the full moon and the stars, if we had seen nothing but the images of them on a lake which was rippled, however faintly, by a breeze?"—Froude.

principles and laws. Like the scientist, the historian also should frame hypotheses and theories to explain events.*

No scientist can frame even plausible theories, unless he is gifted with what Tyndall styled scientific imagination. The historian should also possess scientific imagination to guide him in historical researches and in explaining events.† Hence it is not correct to say that history "can have no presuppositions, her province is to recall and to construct, and she demands from the historian to make his mind simply the mirror of reality, the surrender of his judgment to the decree of the ages, not the projection of his fancies into a region that has for ever passed from the limit of creation, dead to the action and the storm of life, whose tranquil expanse no breath of thought can ruffle, and when the charm is broken, the mirror is moved."

The possession of scientific imagination is absolutely necessary for the historian who aspires to write the History of India during the period of British supremacy; for he has to work with insufficient and defective materials. There are missing links in the chain of evidence for the theory known as Darwin's; it is scientific imagination which is indented upon in filling up the hiatus. So the historian of British India will have to face many missing links in the chain of evidence to explain historical events; for there are many secret and confidential State documents which he cannot easily get access to, or get permission to publish.§ Of the published records it is only necessary to say that they are not always absolutely trustworthy. Grant Duff in his "History of the Marathas," writes :—

"The records of the Company's Government in India are, probably, the best historical materials in the world: there we find the reasons for every undertaking;........the deliberations of the Council, the separate opinions of the members composing it, and their final judgement."

The records of the East India Company, it is hardly necessary to repeat, are not trustworthy. Even Grant Duff admits that

"many services, performed without any great degree of exertion or ability, have, in consequence of their results, been extravagantly praised, and give a tone to Indian dispatches which prejudices sober judgment."**

* "Hypotheses are to be held provisionally, subject to modification and abandonment, in so far as they may from time to time prove inconsistent with the results of further experimental research. On the other hand, when hypotheses embrace and explain extensive ranges of phenomena, when experiment confirms the results they foreshadow, when successive discoveries raise them higher and higher in the scale of probability, they lose more and more their provisional character, and gradually assume the name and rank of theories till at last they come to be embodied permanently among the recognised doctrines of philosophy and science."—Professor Hofmann.

† The well-known historian Mommsen truly considered imagination to be "the author of all history as of all poetry."

§ Sir William Foster's "A Guide to the India Office Records (1600-1858)" shows that there are several thousands of volumes of Mss which have to be very carefully and patiently gone through and edited by hundreds of competent scholars for publication. If the work be taken in hand in right earnest it will take five or six decades before these are made accessible to the reading public interested in the Christian period of Indian History.

There are also Manuscript records in the British Museum as well as in the Secretariats of the several provinces of this country. Where are the workers to use them? But have we utilized to the full all printed records which are now available in public libraries?

In concluding his "Annals of Orissa," Sir W. W. Hunter wrote :—

"In writing this book, a conviction has painfully forced itself home to my mind, that no permanent work can be done without a systematic survey of the Records on a much larger scale than any single man can effect. When the same hands have to mark and fell the timber in the forest, to drag it out to the open, and then to build it into a house, the result can scarcely hope to satisfy the canons of art. One is so glad to find materials for the edifice, as to be constantly tempted to exaggerate their importance, and to give them a more important place than they deserve. Small time can be spent on testing the soundness of the rafters and beams. Until a division of labour takes place, the materials being collected in India and then subjected to the leisurely action of European research, no exact or really permanent results will be obtained. Under the present system, some Indian investigators may do their work more skilfully than others; but their highest effort will in the end prove little more than a neat-handed backwoodsman's cottage, destined to give way to more stately and enduring edifices, on the approach of an organized system of labour." (Vol. II. p: 278).

** James Mill, father of the celebrated John Stuart Mill, whose History of British India Lord Macaulay

It must be remembered that even in private correspondence, Europeans have not been very scrupulous in their regard for truth. The late Principal Caird, in his address on the scientific character of Bacon delivered to the students of the University of Glasgow on 20th November, 1880, observed that

"private letters and diaries are not always trustworthy exponents of character. Many men posture artificially, even in their familiar correspondence, and the moral sentiments and pious meditations of secret journals are not seldom composed with a half conscious view to posthumous reputation and the purposes of the biographer."

If private records are not above suspicion, how can one expect public and political records to be trustworthy and reliable ? One should, at the same time, remember that "politics hath no conscience." Or as the historian Freeman has said :

"When we come to manifestoes, proclamations, diplomatic documents which have not yet reached the stage of treaties, the case is wholly different. Here we are in the very chosen region of lies ; everybody is, by the nature of the case, trying to overreach everybody else."

—The Methods of Historical Study, p. 258.

Then Freeman truly observes:

"Yet they are instructive lies ; they are lies told by people who know the truth, truth may even by various processes, be got out of the lies ; but it will not be got out of them by the process of believing them. He is of childlike simplicity indeed who believes every royal proclamation or the preamble of every Act of Parliament as telling us, not only what certain august persons did, but the motives which led them to do it." Ibid, pp. 258-9.

Thus, then, the historian of British India has to extract truth out of documents which lie. To do the task properly he has to draw upon imagination and intuition or inner consciousness in the same manner, and to the same extent, as a scientific man does. But then history should not be built on the sands of theory and events should not be conceived to suit some favorite political doctrine or theory. The historian should lay the foundation of his work on the solid rock of original research by patiently studying contemporary records * which, although they lie, yet enable us to

"reach that high degree of likelihood which we call moral certainty, that approach to certainty on which reasonable men are content to act even in the gravest concerns of life... And this kind of evidence, evidence on which men act every day, evidence on which we stake our fortunes, our honor and our lives is the kind of evidence which we get in our historical studies...Our evidence then for the facts of our branch of knowledge or science is less strong than the evidence for the facts of some other branches. But do we not nevertheless know more than some of our neighbours as to the causes of the facts with which we deal ? Surely we know more about the human will than we know about Force.... And we can after all make some inferences from the course of those affairs, we can lay down some rules which may almost be called laws and of which I venture to think that we can see the why and because more clearly than we can in the case of physical laws.....If mind is higher than matter, if moral causes are higher than physical, for that very reason they come less under the dominion of rigid rules ; their details are by reason of the very height of the subject, less certain than the details of those studies which deal with lower subjects." Freeman's Methods of Historical Study, pp. 151-154.

considered to be "the greatest historical work which has appeared in our language since that of Gibbon," speaks in the following terms of the truthful character of the records of the East India Company :—"Under the skill which the Court of Directors have all along displayed in suppressing such information as they wished not to appear," etc.

In the advertisement to the Second Edition of "A History of the Sikhs by Captain Joseph Davey Cunningham," Peter Cunningham, under whose supervision it was published in 1853, wrote :—

"The printed materials for the recent History of India are not of that character on which historians can rely. State Papers, presented to the people by both houses of Parliament, have been altered to suit the temporary views of political warfare, or abridged out of mistaken regard to the tender feelings of survivors."

To support his contention the Editor quoted the following passage from Kaye's History of the Afghan War :

"The character and career of Alexander Burnes have both been misrepresented in those collections of State Papers which are supposed to furnish the best materials of history but which are often only one-sided compilations of garbled documents,—counterfeits, which the ministerial stamp forces into currency, defrauding a present generation, and handing down to posterity a chain of dangerous lies." (Kaye, Afghanistan, ii, 13).

* "Contemporary writers do not, it is stated, get beyond mere records of events, records at once one-sided, incomplete, and confusing. It is indeed necessary to have the records in great number and variety : because the true and real record can only be given by him who combines all

Contemporary records, written by Indians and uninfluenced by foreigners, are very valuable and trustworthy historical evidence, and these deserve more attention and credit than they have hitherto received. These contemporary records should form what Freeman styled "Original Authorities." Indian History during the British period should be studied in these original authorities as far as available. Original authorities have been defined by the above-named author to be "those writers from whom we have no appeal." Thus then the records written by Indians form original authorities for British Indian History. These records should be compared and deductions and historical inferences should be drawn from them with great judgment and intelligence.*

Then again some importance should be attached to traditions, legends and anecdotes. Historical criticism demands that great caution should be exercised in handling legends and anecdotes. Very possibly these have to be rejected altogether, but in doing so, some truth is also likely to be cast aside. Regarding anecdotes, Freeman has truly observed that

"they are so largely improved in passing from hand to hand, the bright side of one man, the dark side of another, has its hue so carefully heightened, the probabilities of time and place are so utterly forgotten in the various stages of improvement, that a mere anecdote, as it commonly reaches us, is worth very little. In theory the anecdote is part of our contemporary materials, in practice it is very seldom so."

The same observations apply equally to legends and traditions.

To the historian of India under the European Christians, treaties are of the highest importance. History should be studied with their help. To quote Freeman,

"treaties are not meant to deceive as to mere facts; each side commonly knows the facts too well for that. For its own purpose therefore a treaty ranks among sources of the very highest authority for historical knowlede."

Freeman warns us against placing much faith in the language of the treaties. He writes :

"When the parties to a treaty make any very exalted professions as to their motives, when they express any very fervent affection either towards each other or towards each other's subjects, we feel somewhat as a wary magistrate feels when counsel begins to take a very high moral tone; he knows that there is some hole in the argument, and he looks about to see where the hole is."

It is on these lines and with these historical materials, then, that the history of British India should be studied. The records bearing on Indian history, written by Englishmen and other Christians, should be made use of with the precautions and warnings set forth above.

Why the task of writing a true history of British India is a very difficult one has been thus mentioned by Sir. W. W. Hunter in the London *Times* of February, 1897:—

"A true history of the Indian people under British rule has still to be pieced together from the archives of a hundred distant record rooms, with a labour almost beyond the powers of any single man, and at an expense almost beyond the reach of any ordinary private fortune."

these many records into one, who avoids the errors arising from special points of view, from narrowness of outlook, from individual ignorance, blindness, or prejudice. Still, in spite of such defects, the contemporary records will always remain the most valuable sources for the future historian who may succeed in sifting their various testimonies, combining and utilising them to produce a fuller and more consistent picture of the bygone age."

—Merz's History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. I, p. 6.

* Max Muller took great pains to prove that the Hindus are not blackguards and liars, as they have been misrepresented to be by many Christian missionaries and Anglo-Indians. His lecture on the "Truthful character of the Hindoos," should be read by all those who have the least suspicion regarding the veracity of the Hindoos. Max Muller concludes his lecture, above referred to, in the following terms :—

"No one ever accused them (i. e., Hindus) of falsehood. There must surely be some ground for this, for it is not a remark that is frequently made by travellers in foreign countries, even in our time, that their inhabitants invariably speak the truth. Read the accounts of English travellers in France, and you will find very little said about French honesty and veracity, while French accounts of England are seldom without a fling at *Perfide Albion* !"

Because Hindus had great regard for truth, therefore, they did not attempt to write History, which is often "the prostitute of politics," on the lines of the historians of the Christian countries of the West

Lord Rosebery, writing of the Irish question, says: "It (the Irish question) has never passed into history, for it has never passed out of politics." But the Indian question, that is, the process by which India passed into the hands of the Europeans, has only rarely gone through politics; that is, it only rarely formed the subject of 'contemporary party strife.' Party politics greatly help history, for it is in this manner only that all the facts of a case are brought to light, and thus history is written in all its true bearings. No period of British rule in India, excepting that of the administration of Warren Hastings, has ever been subjected to minute scrutiny by the party politicians of England. Indian questions never interested the people or the political leaders of England. The easiest way to clear the Houses of the English Parliament of their members and spectators is to discuss any Indian question there. No sooner is any Indian question brought for discussion before a House than the members run in haste out of the precincts of Parliament. It has been a well-known fact that Secretaries of State for India have, session after session, presented their annual Indian Budget to empty Houses. Such being the fact, it is no wonder that the construction of the History of India during British rule is so very difficult, because the materials are wanting. The records are not to be relied upon, because they were written by Christians, who took pride in painting non-Christians in the blackest color possible. So, the British Period of Indian History can never be perfect, if we confine our attention to, and place implicit faith in, the contemporary records by the British. We have to challenge the truthfulness of those records and not only critically, but sceptically, examine their contents.

It was not difficult for Washington Irving and Prescott to write true accounts of the conquest of the different countries of America by the Christian Spaniards, but it would not be easy for any one to write a true history of the acquisition of India by the Christian English.

For the Spaniards were Roman Catholic Christians. Amongst Roman Catholics there is an institution known as "Confession." They have to confess their sins, their iniquities and their crimes to a priest. Thus they come to reflect on their conduct and so generally reform themselves. They are not quite hardened sinners and their consciences also are, therefore, not quite dead. It is due to this fact that the Spanish conquerors of Mexico and Peru have left a true record of their deeds in the American continent. In their old age and on their death beds they confessed the misdeeds which they had been guilty of, in conquering Mexico and Peru. Hence, not much difficulty was experienced by the historians who wrote on the conquest of Mexico and Peru.*

But the case is quite different with the natives of England. They mostly belong to the Protestant sect of Christianity. They have no institution of "confessions." Clive and Warren Hastings have not left any account of their misdeeds.

Undoubtedly, it is the civil and military officers in the employ of the Government of India who are best qualified to write a true history of India under the British administration. But they dare not do so, for they cannot forget how those who tried it were punished by the British Government. Captain Cunningham, who wrote the true account of the down-fall of the Sikh Power in India, was severely punished for his work.† No less pitiable was the fate of Major Evans Bell, who was disgraced and

* To understand the Christian period of Indian history, it is necessary to study the conquest of Mexico and Peru by the Spaniards and that of Ireland by the English. There are curious parallels in the modes of administration of those lands and India by Christian conquerors.

There is another side to the Institution of "Confession". Those who confess imagine that all their sins will be removed by mere confession, and so they may not be afraid to commit and perpetrate sins and iniquities of all kinds without compunction or pricking of conscience.

† In the advertisement to the second edition of "History of the Sikhs," Peter Cunningham (one of the brothers of the author) wrote :—

"The author fell a victim to the truth related in this book. He wrote History in advance of his time, and suffered for it: but posterity will, I feel assured, do justice to his memory.

* * * * * *

".....What Gibbon calls 'truth, naked, unblushing truth, the first virtue of more serious history,'

dismissed from the service, for he had the courage to expose the British mal-administration of India. Missionaries and ministers of the Christian faith can or will seldom do anything which compromises the position of their co-religionists and compatriots in India. Their object is to bring the heathens into the fold of Christ, and they generally set their own co-religionists as paragons of all virtues before the black heathens of India. In fact. of late, it is the highly professing Christians who have been trying to whitewash the character of such of their heroes as Clive, Warren Hastings and Dalhousie and justifying the misdeeeds of other Christian statesmen. These highly professing Christians have hardly any sympathy with the natives of India—nay, they have less sympathy than those who do not profess Christianity.

Non-official Englishmen, that is, those who are not in Government employ, but earn their livelihood as traders and merchants, as a class, never had any sympathy towards Indians. In his well-known Letters from a Competition-wallah, written in 1864, Sir G. O. Trevelyan said :—

"Heaven knows I would give a month's pay, or a year's pension to have my will of some ruffians for what I have heard them say with applause, and seen them do with impunity. Fearful symptoms these of what must be seething below. However kind he might be to his native servants, however just to his native tenants, there is not a single non-official person in India who would not consider the sentiment that we hold India for the benefit of the inhabitants of India a loathsome un-English piece of cant."

What Trevelyan wrote in 1864, holds true even now. In Trevelyan's time, the official classes at least manifested some sympathy with the natives of India, but now the British officials have made an alliance with non-officials in looking upon India as a land for exploitation, for the benefit of their own co-religionists and compatriots. In his work on *New India,* Sir Henry Cotton observes :—

"The time when the non-official Europeans formed one party in India and the natives another, while the Government officials were charged with the function of protecting native interests, has passed away, and instead thereof we now see a state of things in which the native community exists alone on the one side, while both classes of Englishmen, official as well as non-official, are united on the other." (Page 40 of first edition).

In these circumstances, it is idle to expect a true history of India, from the British—either officials, non-officials, or missionaries.

The position of educated Indians who are able to throw light on the history of the British period is a very critical and delicate one. Any attempt on their part to unravel the tangled web of Indian History during the Christian supremacy, is construed as creating discontent and disaffection towards the British Government. *The Pioneer,* a well-known British daily of India, published a leading article in its issue of 9th August 1896, under the heading *"The Bengalee Press, how to deal with it."* Thus wrote the above-named journal :—

"We know how Englishmen within the memory of living men treated their own newspaper writers......If a gentle and graceful writer forgot himself so far as to call the Prince Regent "an Adonis of forty" he got two years "hard." If a clergyman praised the French revolution and advocated Parliamentary reform and fair representation, he was condemned to work in iron manacles, to wade in sludge among the vilest criminals."

In other words, historical truths should be suppressed because they are not pleasant reading and hearing to the self-sufficient and assertive inhabitants of England.

Mr. Justice Strachey, who tried Mr. Tilak, in 1897 for sedition, in charging the jury, prejudiced them against all historical discussions unfavorable to the British Government of India.The Sedition Act, which was an outcome of Tilak's trial, virtually made truth-speaking, on the part of an Indian, a criminal offence. Under these circumstances, there need not be any wonder that a true history of British India is a desideratum in the literature of Oriental subjects.

should alone direct the pen of the historian ; and truth alone influenced the mind and guided the pen of the Author of this book."

For writing his history of the Sikhs, Captain Cunningham was removed from political employment by the East India Company.

But because there are so many difficulties and drawbacks for the proper execution of the task, it will be sheer cowardice not to attempt it. From want of proper materials, of course, the work will be an imperfect and incomplete one. But just as it is "better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all," so it is better to have attempted and failed in the task, than never to have attempted it at all.*

II. Fallacies and Problems

Students of the Christian period of Indian History have to face many fallacies, many misrepresentations and distortions of truths and facts, wilfully indulged in by English writers to suit their convenience and purpose. Foremost amongst these fallacies stands the one which represents that India was given to anarchy until the British assumed its government. A late Commander-in-Chief of the British Isles, named Lord Wolsley, characterised that anarchy in the following terms in his evidence before the Welbey Commission :—

"My views are that India never existed as India at all until we went there. It was a conglomeration of fighting States, where Mahomedans were cutting the throats of Hindus ; and everything that is worth having in India has been derived from English rule.......All the happiness and greatness of India depends upon England.......India would never have existed but for England. India was never a united country until she came under our rule. If left to herself India would degenerate into a bear garden."

His lordship was a native of Ireland, a country which was conquered by England. It is only necessary to say that it is a falsehood that anarchy and misgovernment was the normal state of affairs in India until the British assumed the reins of its government. † Anarchy in India was due to the Christians of various nationalities who came to India during the decadence of Mughal rule. Had India been left to herself, she would have discovered some remedies for her ills, and in the struggle for existence, the fittest would have survived. But India was not left to evolve a system of her own government.

Another fiction indulged in by the British is that India has been conquered by the sword, that the natives of England have become masters of India by conquest in the same manner as the Normans conquered England, or as Englishmen conquered the natives of Scotland, Ireland and Wales. These two falsehood, which stare every student of the British History of India in the face, should be thoroughly exposed. No historian would be properly discharging his duties if he were to turn aside from thoroughly investigating how much truth these assertions made by the Britishers contain.

"In history", wrote Seeley, "everything depends on turning narrative into problems."§ It will be useful then to turn the narrative of the rise of the Christian Power in India into problems.

* "Or what higher and unselfish satisfaction could an author derive from spending half a life time in producing a work which in the end may fall dead-born from the press, if it were not the conviction that in the cause in which he has failed another after him may succeed, and that his failure may be a portion of the silent and hidden efforts that co-operate towards a useful end."

—Merz's History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Vol. I, p. 5.

† See India Reform Tracts, No IV & IX, reprinted and re-published by the present writer.

§ "Theory and generalisation are the life-blood of history. They make it intelligible. They give it unity. They convey to us the instruction which it always contains, together with so much for practical guidance in the management of communities as history is capable of rendering. But they need to be applied with reserve, and not only with an impartial mind, but after a painstaking examination of all the facts, whether or no they seem to make for the particular theory stated, and of all the theories which any competent predecessor has propounded. For the historian, while he must keep himself from falling under the dominion of any one doctrine by which it is sought to connect or explain phenomena, must welcome all the light which any such doctrine can throw upon facts. Even if such a doctrine be imperfect, even if it be tainted by error, it may serve to indicate relations between facts, or to indicate the true importance of facts, which previous writers had failed to observe or had passed too lightly over. It is thus that History is always growing. It is for this reason that History always needs to be rewritten. History is a progressive science, not merely because new facts are constantly being discovered, not merely because the changes in the world give to old facts a new significance, but also because every truly penetrating and original mind sees in the old facts something which had not been seen before."

—Bryce's Introduction to the History of the World, Vol. I, p. xiii.

One of the most important problems to be dealt with is whether it was providential that the British happened to acquire political supremacy in India. From the means resorted to in acquiring that political supremacy and from the cold and unsympathetic behaviour of the British towards Indians, many have expressed the opinion that it was anything but providential that the British rose to power in India.

The treatment received from the English by the peoples whom they conquered was no better than what they themselves had experienced at the hands of their Norman conquerors.

In his "Rights of Man," Thomas Paine writes :—

"Governments arise either *out of* the people or *over* the people. The English Government is one of those which arose out of a conquest, and not out of society, and consequently it arose over the people."......"Conquest and tyranny transplanted themselves with William the Conqueror from Normandy into England, and the country is yet disfigured with the marks."......"It is the nature of conquest to turn everything upside down......In the addresses of the English Parliaments to their kings we see neither the intrepid spirit of the old Parliaments of France, nor the serene dignity of the present National Assembly; neither do we see in them anything of the style of English manners which border somewhat on bluntness. Since then they are neither of foreign extraction, nor naturally of English production, their origin must be sought for elsewhere, and that origin is the Norman Conquest. They are evidently of the vassalage class of manners, and emphatically mark the prostrate distance that exists in no other condition of men than between the conqueror and the conquered, That this vassalage idea and style of speaking was not got rid of even at the Revolution of 1688, is evident from the declaration of Parliament to William and Mary in these words: "We do most humbly and faithfully *submit* ourselves, our heirs and posterities, for ever." Submission is wholly a vassalage term, repugnant to the dignity of freedom, and an echo of the language used at the Conquest."

Again, he writes:

"It is somewhat curious to observe, that although the people of England have been in the habit of talking about kings, it is always a foreign house of kings, hating foreigners, yet governed by them."

The natives of England bitterly felt their subjugation to the Normans. Readers of Scott's *Ivanhoe* and Thierry's *History of the Norman Conquest* need not be told how the English were ill-treated by their Norman Conquerors. Referring to the Norman Conquest, Freeman wrote :—

"The circumstances of the conquest would no doubt bring about some changes. It would probably tend to increase the numbers of "the class of slaves. Such of the natives as were neither slain nor driven out would of course pass into that class."

In another place, Freeman said,

"Under John and Henry the Third, England felt to the full the bitterness......of the conquest. The land was overrun by utter strangers; the men of the old-English birth and the descendants of the first Norman settlers both saw the natives of other lands placed over the heads of both alike. Places of trust and honour and wealth were handed over to foreign favorites, and every man in the land was exposed to a yet heavier scourge, to the violence and insolence of foreign mercenaries."

It should not be forgotten that no conquest was ever effected by observing the codes of morality prescribed by the recognised religions of the world. The conquest of Scotland or of Ireland by England is euphemistically called the "Union." But how was the "union" in each case brought about? The union of Scotland with England was brought about by "corruption." In his "History of England in the Eighteenth Century," Lecky writes:—

"The sacrifice of a nationality is a measure which naturally produces such intense and enduring discontent that it never should be exacted unless it can be accompanied by some political or material advantages to the lesser country that are so great and at the same time so evident as to prove a corrective.........The Scotch Parliament was very arbitrary and corrupt, and by no means a faithful representative of the people. The majority of the nation were certainly opposed to the Union, and directly or indirectly, it is probable that much corruption was employed to effect it."*

In the *Review of Reviews* for July, 1898, W. T. Stead graphically described the union of Ireland with England by means of "free rape."

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* See the article entitled "The English Connection with Scotland" in *The Modern Review* for May, 1907, pp. 470 *et seq.*

The English treated the Scotch after the union no better than the Normans had treated the English. In his work on "Union of England and Scotland," McKinnon wrote:—

"To the unsympathetic Englishman, Scotland, even as late as the middle of the last century, seemed a land of barbarians.........'The English ministers,' says Ramsay, 'did not know much more of Scotland than they did of Tartary.'.........No government was ever less fitted, by knowledge or sympathy, to govern a people in accord with its wants."*

The natives of Ireland felt the yoke which their conquerors imposed on their necks. Some of the Irish poets have expressed their feelings in very pathetic verses. Their poet, Thomas Moore, thus refers to the enslaved condition of his countrymen:---

"The future ages wondering ask,
"How hands so vile could conquer hearts so brave.
"'Twas fate, they will say, a wayward fate
"Your web of discord wove ;
"While your tyrants joined in hate,
"You never joined in love."

The status of the natives of Wales, as far as authentic history is able to shed any light on the subject, was that of slaves. In his work named 'Early Britain," Alfred J. Church thus explains the origin of the term "Welsh" or "Welch." "Welsh," writes he, "means 'foreigner'; the invaders, by a strange yet common figure of speech, calling the native people "foreigners" (that is, to say, 'slaves'.) Freeman writes

"that one of the common old-English names for a female slave is wylne or Welsh woman."

Thus it is evident that the meaning of the word *'Welsh' is 'Slave.'*

It is the natives of the countries conquered by England who have greatly helped in building up and extending the empire of the English. McKinnon, in his work to which allusion has already been made above, writes :

"The Scottish soldier, merchant, statesman, colonist and explorer have done, relatively speaking, at least as much as their English compatriots in increasing the extent and developing the trade of the British dominions."

The same holds partly true in the case of the Irish and the Welsh.

If Clive and Warren Hastings (who were natives of England) showed the way to acquire political power in India, it was the Irish and the Scotch who were the authors of those policies and measures by which India passed within the grasp of the English. The Marquess Wellesley was a native of Ireland, and his right-hand man, Sir John Malcolm, was a native of Scotland. The Marquis of Dalhousie was also a native of Scotland. Dalhousie completed what Wellesley had commenced, that is, the establishment of the supremacy of England in India.

No one need wonder that the natives of Scotland and Ireland shaped the policy of governing, of acquiring power in, or rather of the so-called conquest of, India. It has been truly remarked by Henry George in his *Progress and Poverty :*

"That the deliverers, the liberators, the advancers of humanity, have always been those who were moved by the sight of injustice and misery rather than those spurred by their own suffering. As it was a Moses, learned in all the lore of the Egyptians, and free to the court of Pharaoh, and not a tasked slave, forced to make bricks without straw, who led the children of Israel from the House of Bondage: as it was the Gracchi, of patrician blood and fortune, who struggled to the death against the land-grabbing system which finally destroyed Rome, so has it always been that the oppressed, the degraded, the down-trodden have been freed and elevated rather by the efforts and the sacrifices of those to whom fortune had been more kind than by their own strength."

It is providential that India has come to be ruled by the English rather than by the French. Freeman has observed that

"to win freedom as an heritage for ever, there are times when we have more need of the vices of kings than of their virtues."

Or to quote the words of Macaulay, as quoted by Freeman :—

"Her (England's) interest was so directly opposed to the interest of her rulers that she had no hope but in their errors and misfortunes. The talents and even the virtues of her six first French

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See also *The Modern Review* for May, 1907 (Vol. I.)

kings were a curse to her. The follies and vices of the seventh were her salvation...............England, which, since the battle of Hastings, had been ruled generally by wise statesmen, always by brave soldiers, fell under the dominion of a trifler and a coward. From that moment her prospects brightened."

The former rulers of India lived in India and sympathised with the natives of India. But the same cannot be said of the British rulers of India.

"Sovereigns are identified", to quote the words of Sir Charles Napier, the hero of Sindh, "with the countries they rule, but a mercantile oligrachy like the Court of Directors, is not interested beyond the annual balance sheet during their respective tenures of power ;...............Like the pedlar Jew, the Director seeks small profit and quick returns, understanding well his personal interest but regardless of Indian greatness or happiness................For a hundred years they have milked the cow and given her no sustenance."

That this Christian rule has been bringing about—not directly, but indirectly, Indian Unity, will be evident to those who have their eyes open and can read the signs of the times. In his work on New India, Sir Henry Cotton writes :

"The Anglo-Indian agitation..............the whole attitude, in brief, of Europeans in regard to the so-called Ilbert Bill, have tended far more to advance the true cause of Indian unity than any mere legislation on the lines of the original Bill would have been likely to accomplish...........But the unreasonable clamour and rancour of its opponents, and the unexpected success which attended their efforts, give rise to a counter agitation of first-rate importance and of the most far-reaching character. ....The very object was attained which the Anglo-Indian community, if it had been wise in its generation, would have spared no labour to prevent. The people of India have not been slow to follow the example set to them by Englishmen ; they have learnt their strength, the power of combination, the force of numbers."

The attitude of the British towards Indians has evoked the spirit of patriotism and nationality in the breast of the latter. It is providential, therefore, that India has been entrusted to the rule of England, which has been the great agent in the regeneration of India and Indians. Lord Acton, in his lecture on *The Study of History*, has truly observed that

"The wisdom of divine rule appears not in the perfection but in the improvement of the world."

III. "The Christian Power"

The Roman Catholic Christians, represented by the natives of Portugal, who discovered the sea-route to India, had the authority of the Pope to wage war against non-Christians and conquer their territories. The Protestant Christian natives of England were empowered by their dissolute "Mutton-eating King," Charles II, to make peace and war with the non-Christian princes and peoples.

The Nestorian Christians had found an asylum in India long before the discovery of the sea-route to India by any Christian people of Europe. Had the Nestorian Christians acquired political supremacy in this country, when the sea-route was discovered, there would have been, in all probability, no occasion for any Roman Catholic or Protestant Christian nation to conquer India.

In the *Drawing-room Scrap Album* for 1840, a poem by William Howitt entitled "The Rajah's Daughter" contains the line—"When rose the Christian's sterner power," with reference to British rule in India.

Those who are Christians are proud to proclaim that India has come under "Christian" government. Thus he who reads the Barrows Lectures of 1896-97, delivered in India by Dr. Henry Barrows under the title of "Christianity, the World Religion," will be convinced of the truth of the assertion made above. In the course of his first lecture, "*The World-wide aspects of Christianity*" that Reverend gentleman said:—

"The nominal disciples of Christ in the world to-day are more than four hundred millions, while under Christian governments dwelling beneath a reign of law and the influence of the Gospel, are more than six hundred millions of the world's inhabitants. Christianity seems to hold the field to-day. It has been truly said that "the non-Christian nations could not exclude Christianity if they would, and the most enlightened of them would not if they could."

He concluded the first lecture by saying that

"the waters of Christian civilization have been long accumulating on the high lands of Europe and America, and a mighty rushing river has suddenly descended on the thirsty African plains and over the tropic fields of India. . . .and the roar of the on-coming torrent appears to some of us a new fulfilment of Ezekiel's vision of a sacred stream, which shall go out into the east country and down into the desert, healing the waters of the bitter sea."

In his second lecture on *"The World-wide Effects of Christianity,"* Dr. Barrows said

"that it is not without significance that the nations that have accepted the Christian faith hold in their hands the civilization and the practical sovereignty of the globe."

In 1859, Baptist Wriothesley Noel, M. A. published from London "England and India: an Essay on the duty of Englishmen towards the Hindus." In it he wrote:

"That which is the duty of all Christians must be the duty of the members of the East Indian Government, if they are Christians. If any men do not profess to be Christians, they ought not to be sent by professed Christians to govern a heathen people;. . . . and if the governors of India are professed Christians, they should confess Christ." (Page 9).

He quotes with approval what Captain Eastwick, one of the Directors of the East India Company, said in 1858 in a speech at the East India House:

"It is my solemn belief that God has given us that great country to promote the spread of His Gospel." (*Ibid.*, p. 15).

In replying to the deputation of the Indian Christian community, Sir William Marris, a late Governor of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, said :

"As you know, the Government in this country stands pledged to do justice to all religious interests impartially and to favour none. None the less there must be a natural bond of sympathy between the Christian Power, from which the Government in India had actually derived its origin, and those people of this ancient land, who have embraced and now share, in the Christian religion and its observances." (*The Englishman*, April 5, 1923, p. 10.)

From a consideration of the above-stated facts, the designation of this work as *Rise, of the Christian Power in India* will be found appropriate.

The expression "Christian Power" has not been objected to by any foreign Christian. This is, perhaps, due to the fact that,

"Most Englishmen, for example, would be indignant if you denied them the name of Christians, however little they may deserve it."*

But some of the "coloured" Christians of India have objected to the expression on two grounds, namely, they do not consider Britishers Christians, and secondly, as Christians they do not enjoy any special privileges. They are not exempt from the political disabilities which "coloured" non-Christians of India—whether "heathens" or "infidels," labour under.

IV. Miscellaneous Observations

As an introduction to the study of this work, the reader is recommended to peruse "Empire in Asia—How we came by it—a Book of Confessions" by Henry Torrens, M. P., a cheap reprint of which has been published by the present writer, as well as Mr. N. Kasturi's *British Occupation of India.*

No period of British Indian History has been written about so much as the thirteen years during which Warren Hastings presided over its affairs. It was his impeachment which exposed the manner in which the representatives and servants of the East India Company behaved towards the princes and inhabitants of this country. They were very rightly called by Edmund Burke "birds of prey and passage in India." The fact should not be forgotten that, by its constitution, the East India Company was a Society of "Adventurers" and not of "gentlemen." So no surprise need be felt at their conduct towards the people of India.

It is quite natural that many of his countrymen, his admirers and indecent partisans, are trying to explain away Warren Hastings's misdeeds in India. The number of his

John Dendy's "Successful Life," London 1897. Preface, pp. XI and XII.

apologists is very large. But we are of the opinion that the account of that proconsul by Torrens in his *Empire in Asia, how we came by it, a book of confessions,* is so fair that we commend it to our readers, especially as a cheap reprint of that book is now available. It is, therefore, that the account of Warren Hastings's administration appearing in this work is brief and does not mention all the malpractices and vile deeds with the perpetration of which he was charged by the conductors of his impeachment in England.

The part played by Mostyn in fomenting domestic dissensions and confusion at Poona, and thus greatly contributing to the downfall of the Maratha Empire, has not been sufficiently laid stress upon in any previous work on Indian History.

Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore appear in this work, in quite a different colour from that with which they have been painted by Anglo-Indian writers.

The administration of the Marquess of Wellesley forms an important landmark in Indian History; and therefore, it has been given in greater detail than is to be found in any other work on the subject.

Facts connected with the administration of the Marquess Wellesley have been interpreted from the Indian point of view. We have had to depend for those facts solely on the records written by Britishers. It would have been better had we come across contemporary records of that period written by Indians. But in the absence of such records, we have tried to utilize the British-written records in the most impartial way possible. The second administration of Lord Cornwallis was a very short one; in our opinion his death was hastened by the attitude assumed by Lord Lake. During Sir George Barlow's administration occurred the mutiny at Vellore. There is little doubt now that it was caused by the indecent partizanship of the then Governor of Madras towards missionaries of the Christian faith.

In its issue of 8th May, 1924, the *Times Literary Supplement* in the leading article on the *Legend of the American Revolution,* wrote:

"The great Renaissance scholar Cardano said of the writing of history that it is of all literary arts the most difficult, since it demands not only style, but diligent research into the smallest matters, and a sound judgment. Moreover, he added, the historian who describes little things will bore his readers; if he deals only with great things, he will deceive them, since all great things have their origin in little things. That, he concludes, is why so few histories are written."

I have already mentioned the difficulties which have to be faced by an Indian writer of the history of the British period of his country. It is for those reasons, in addition to what Cardano has said, that so far no Indian writer has come forward to write a true history of that period. An historian must possess "facts" which he is required to treat as "chemical formulæ" with "bloodless impartiality." His judgment should be sound and he should not be devoid of "scientific imagination." These are good ideals, though, as "every State wishes to promote national pride and is conscious that this cannot be done by unbiassed history," "history, in every country, is so taught as to magnify that country" (Bertrand Russell). No such effort has been made in the present work.

The British period of Indian History has not been studied as yet by Indian scholars as critically as some of them have done the pre-British periods. But it is necessary for us to know the circumstances which have brought about the situation in which we find ourselves at present. Britishers could not have acquired political supremacy in India but for the help they received from traitors amongst Indians. Why India reeked with traitors is a problem for consideration. It has been lack of patriotism which to some extent accounts for it. Then want of forethought, foresight and, above all, desire for self-aggrandizement have been the principal factors in the production of traitors amongst us. The caste system of the Hindus may be partially responsible for it. But the number of traitors amongst Muhammadans, who have no caste system amongst them, has not been less than amongst Hindus bound down by caste restrictions.

Human nature is naturally weak, and those who encourage people to turn traitors and betray the interests of their country are as despicable as the traitors themselves. How sublime is the prayer of Christ Jesus which he taught his followers: "Lead us not into

temptation but deliver us from all evils." Had Christian diplomatists acted on that prayer taught to them by their Saviour, it is questionable if they would have succeeded in bringing Indians into that subject condition in which they find themselves to-day.

Hindu women have cheerfully mounted the funeral pyre and reduced themselves to ashes rather than suffer themselves to be polluted by the touch of alien conquerors. But unfortunately similar praise cannot be given to Indian men holding responsible situations. Many of them betrayed the interests of the State, succumbing to the temptations of alien rulers. For the sake of "filthy lucre" they did dirty jobs for foreigners and by co-operating with them did not hesitate to rivet the chain of slavery round the necks of their countrymen.

Traditions of virtuous women generally keep Indian women from deviating from the path of virtue. But patriotism not being taught to Indians from their cradle, it has not played the same part in the formation of the character of Indian men, as the ideal of chastity has done in that of Indian women.

The well-known American sociological writer Professor E. A. Ross says:

"Subjection to a foreign yoke is one of the most potent causes of the decay of national character. Take, for example, the Hindoos. A Greek writer, Arrian, declares that 'they are remarkably brave, superior in war to all Asiatics; they are remarkable for simplicity and integrity; so reasonable as never to have recourse to a law suit and so honest as neither to require locks to their doors nor writings to bind their agreements. No Indian was ever known to tell an untruth.' This portrays the precise opposite of modern Hindoo character and the change can be accounted for only by the long subjection of the race to the rule of the foreigner.

"The character of the Greeks a century ago at the time of their struggle of liberation from the Turks was in glaring contrast to that of the classical Greeks. ...

"Even a domination which is just and benevolent may stunt the spiritual growth of a people. The British domination of Egypt makes for the material prosperity of the people but does not advance them appreciably toward the plane of self-government. The elite of the Hindoos feel that the alien domination has a blighting effect upon the higher life of the people of India."—Principles of Sociology, pp. 132-133.

Slaves generally behave like dogs. The author was once told by a Maratha Brahman that "Indians are dogs." He did not understand him and so he asked the latter to explain his meaning. The Maratha Brahman said: "One dog cannot bear the sight of another dog, but every dog is faithful to his master." "So," he continued, "one Indian cannot bear the sight of another Indian, but every Indian is loyal to his foreign master."

That is a very good description of canine slave mentality.

But canine mentality was also shown by the British servants of the East India Company in their political and diplomatic transactions with the people of India. A thoughtful English writer says:

"The moment we begin to regard our business as a mere machinery for getting as much as we can for ourselves and giving as little as possible in return, we are lowering ourselves to the level of such dogs," (which struggle for a bone which one must get and the other must lose).*

This is exactly what the English did in India to usurp power.

Slave mentality fosters sneakishness, cowardice, love of ease and love of pleasure. The atmosphere of slavery promotes immorality in all forms. To be in the good graces of their masters, slaves will do any mean and despicable act. They bring about the ruin of their own kith and kin by trying to please their masters and thus more and more firmly rivet the chain of slavery round the necks of their friends, relations and themselves. Slaves are thus always traitors to their country. This lesson is brought home to us from the histories of those peoples who were born and brought up as slaves.

An English poet has sung:

"Rule Britannia, rule the waves,
Britons never shall be slaves."

But Britons were at one time slaves. This is proved beyond the shadow of a doubt by historical evidence.

Thus, because they were slaves, there were traitors amongst the Britons and thus came to an end the rule of their Saxon Kings. Writes an English historian that

* Successful Life, by Jonn Dendy, London. 1897, p. 140.

"In the time of a king called Ethelred the Redeless, eight years after Alfred's death, the Northmen came again with great conquering armies. He gathered many armies and fleets against his enemies, but owing to the treachery of his great men the English never won victories. Amongst the Thanes had arisen some very powerful nobles who had great lands of their own and great armies. These men would not join together to fight against the invaders but quarrelled among themselves. Sometimes when a battle was about to begin they deserted with all their soldiers, or pretended to be sick and would not fight. And when the Northmen attacked the lands of one or two of these nobles, the others did nothing to help; they seemed pleased to see enemies doing harm to Englishmen. Among them were one or two true men who fought well for their country, but most of them were foul traitors not worthy to be called Englishmen.....

"So the Northmen again did as they pleased with English houses and cattle and churches and murdered helpless countryfolk, until despair settled down upon the land, and men said one Northman was worth ten Englishmen."*

Men with slave mentality or slaves lack cohesion. There may be some good men among slaves—and that there were slaves who were good men is evident from the histories of ancient Greece and Rome, where slavery was a recognised institution. Such good men may be compared to glittering particles of sand which are scattered about by every gust of wind. These glittering particles of sand would not unite to form adamantine rock.

Wolves go about in packs, but not so the dogs. Dogs are led in packs by their masters. So are the slaves.

It was not by observing the Ten Commandments of the Bible that the British people attained political supremacy in India.

Scheming and designing as the Britishers usually were, they knew how to conceal their ulterior designs. Thus it is stated by them that they were forced to assume political power in India, but that it was not their intention to do so. That their statement is not true is asserted by Colonel Malleson, who writes:

"No one can deny that, however dimly the ultimate consequences may at the time have been foreseen by our countrymen, we fought for the position which we now occupy. It was with design that we crushed the hopes of the French; with design that we conquered Bengal; with design that we subdued Tippu; with design that in 1802-3 we contested Hindustan with Sindhia and Holkar." P. xv, Introduction to *Final French Struggles in India.* London, 1878.

Then again, Britishers, like other "nations," are averse to the exposure of the shortcomings and vices of their compatriots. Thus Malleson says:

"Some of my friends who read a portion of this book (*Final French Struggles in India*) in the pages of the *Calcutta Review,* have not hesitated to tell me that they regard as unpatriotic the attempt of an Englishman to search out and record events which may contrast favourably a rival nation with his own. But history is either a record of events which have happened or it is romance. If it assumes to be a record of events which have happened, it must record the evil as well as the good, misfortune as well as gain, defeat as well as victory. No one will dispute this broad axiom." (Ibid, p. viii).

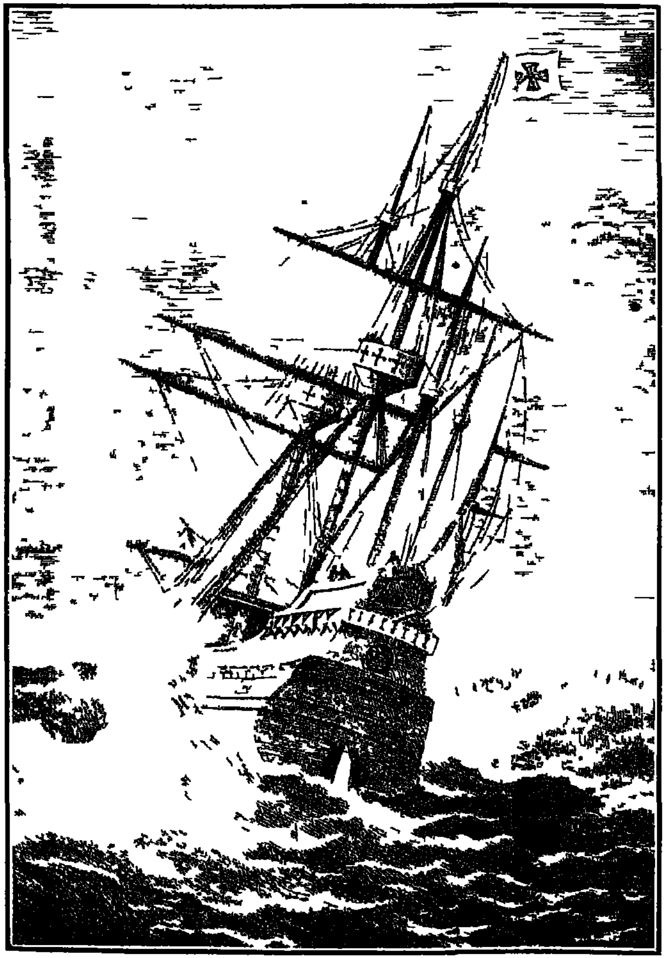
No one need, therefore, be astonished at the attitude of some Anglo-Indian journalists to my works, in labelling them "biassed history," "rabid history," &c., because truth being unpalatable to them, they want every one to write romance, rather than the true history of British India.

Many British writers and speakers have not scrupled to blacken the memories of those Indian princes whom their compatriots had deceived and defrauded or with whose help they succeeded in establishing the Christian Power in India. Of course, these princes being dead or held in captivity during their life-time, could not answer their British accusers. It is an Italian saying that one hates the person whom one has injured. That accounts for the attitude of many British writers and speakers towards Indians.

As for gratitude, as Lecky has observed, it is not to be found in politics. The rule of Britain in India being based on politics, gratitude is not to be expected from the average Britisher by the Indian, notwithstanding the fact that that rule was established with Indian money and mostly with Indian blood.

"Piers Ploman Histories," Junior Book IV, pp. 80-81. London 1919

Vasco Da Gama


San Gabriel

Alfonso De Albuquerque

INTRODUCTION

I

STRUGGLES OF DIFFERENT CHRISTIAN NATIONS FOR SUPREMACY IN INDIA

It is said that once Maharaja Ranjit Singh was shown the map of India by one of his Christian officers. Ranjit Singh was an illiterate sovereign.* He did not understand why the map was coloured red, green, blue, yellow, etc. He requested the Christian officer to explain to him the meaning of the different colourings in the map. The officer was good enough to do so. He explained that the red colour represented the territories of India which had passed into the hands of the Christian merchants of England constituting the East India Company. Ranjit immediately exclaimed: *"Sab lal ho jaega"* (*i. e.,* the whole map of India would become red-coloured). There was a ring of prophecy in his exclamation. Hardly had twenty years passed after his death when his words came to be verified to the very letter; for the Christian merchants became masters of almost the whole continent of India and the map of the country became coloured red all over.

It is the object of this history to narrate how this was brought about. The establishment of British supremacy in India is something like a romance in history; for no Christian nation ever came out to India to conquer the country.

II

THE DISCOVERY OF THE SEA-ROUTE TO INDIA BY EUROPEANS

India has always, since time immemorial, played a prominent part in the civilization of the nations of the Earth.† It was to discover the sea-route to India, that Columbus begged the leading sovereigns of Christian Europe to equip him with a fleet, and it is also a matter of history, well-known to every school-boy, how the European nations vied with one another in discovering the sea-route to India. Vasco Da Gama, a native of Portugal, succeeded in discovering the route to India. The European nations had no intention to conquer the country; their object was to establish commercial relations

* It is curious that many of the great men of the East have been illiterate. The prophet Mohamed, and Akbar, Shivaji, Hydar Ali, Jung Bahadur and several other makers of Indian history were totally illiterate.

† It had a great fascination for the people of the middle ages, and formed a lure to lead them to the noblest discoveries and the most splendid expeditions. India and its gold were at the bottom of their most extensive plans of discovery and adventure and no efforts were thought too great, no expenditure too lavish, if only it could be reached.

with India. It was commercial instinct and no other motive which led them to discover the sea-route to India. India—Golden India, the theme of poets, the wonderland of travellers, haunted them in their dreams. In their imagination India was the richest country in the world, a country which supplied the markets of Europe with so many wonderful articles of commerce. In the eleventh century, the Christians of Europe, known as Crusaders, resorted to the East, under the superstitious idea that by so doing they would be absolved of all sins and gain eternal felicity. But the Christians of the fifteenth century, in marked contrast with their co-religionists of the eleventh, set sail to the East to amass earthly riches. They were not prompted by any higher motive or religious zeal when they fitted out expeditions to discover the sea-route to India. They were anxious to discover the sea-route, because this would save much trouble and inconvenience, shifting of luggage and also some expenses. Nor was this all. Land journey in the middle ages was not without risk to life and property—there was the peril of robbery in conveying merchandise and the certainty of extortion, for tolls had to be paid in passing a bridge, along the high way, and at the market.* Moreover, in the middle ages it was the sea-port towns of Italy, like Venice and Genoa, which took the lead in trading with the Eastern countries. The Western and Northern countries of Europe had no facilities to carry on any commercial intercourse with the East. It was, therefore, only natural for these countries to seek the sea-route to India so that they might get Indian articles at a cheaper price than they were then obliged to pay. Europe was not then so rich as now. The European Christians had not then brought any non-Christian nations under subjection, or annihilated them. They became rich after they had set out to discover the sea-route to India. They were stimulated by the desire of the precious luxuries of the East, specially of India; and these wants were the means by which these Christian nations attained by degrees the position which they now occupy in the world.

Columbus set sail to discover India. But he presented to the Christians a new continent to colonize. He died under the impression that he had discovered India. The real credit, however, of discovering the sea-route to India belongs to Portugal.

III

THE PORTUGUESE IN INDIA

The sea-route to India was discovered by Vasco Da Gama, who braved the stormy passage round the Cape of Good Hope, and landed at Calicut on the 22nd May,

* The sea also was not without its perils. Hallam writes

In that state of barbarous anarchy which so long resisted the coercive authority of civil magistrates, the sea held out even more temptation and more impunity than the land, and when the laws had regained their sovereignty, and neither robbery nor private warfare was any longer tolerated, there remained that great common of mankind, unclaimed by any king, and the liberty of the sea was another name for the security of plunderers." (Hallam's *Europe During the Middle Ages.*)

However, sea-voyage was not so expensive as journey by land. In his work on the Influence of sea-power upon the French Revolution and Empire, Captain Mahan writes: "Intercourse by water is always easier and, for a great bulk, quicker than by land, but in those days of wagon carriage and often poor roads it was especially so."

1498. He had only a handful of companions, who were as brave, daring and unscrupulous as himself. Calicut was governed by a Hindu Raja known as the Zamorin. Vasco Da Gama and his Christian companions were very hospitably treated by the Chief. Hospitality forms a marked feature in the national character of the Indians. Little did the Zamorin know that he was entertaining a people who would uproot his dynasty and supplant his authority, and the land which he ruled would pass into the hands of those foreign Christian adventurers who were then sitting at his feet, praying him to grant them permission to trade in India.

In 1500, the Portuguese established a factory at Calicut under Pedro Alvarez Cabral. Three years later, they also built a fortress in that place, which was commanded by the well-known Alphonso de Albuquerque. This Portuguese adventurer, afterwards Governor, captured Goa in 1506, and in 1510 plundered the town of Calicut and burnt the palace of its kings, thus showing gratitude to the Zamorin who patronised the Portuguese in their endeavour to trade with India.*

When the Portuguese landed in India, the Indians were ignorant of the use of fire-arms. Possessed of this advantage, the Portuguese had no difficulty in scoring easy victories over the Indians, whenever the latter tried to oppose them. Within less than a century after they had set foot in India, they explored the Indian Ocean, as far as

* In a letter from Lieut.-Col. Alexander Walker to Mr. B. S. Jones, dated Bowland, January 31, 1818, it is stated:

"It may be observed, indeed, that the behaviour of the Indian States towards mercantile adventurers from all the European nations was uniformly friendly and encouraging. The rich and varied products of their territories rendered the favourable reception of strangers a peculiar part of their policy: most of the chiefs and princes too had either commercial transactions of their own, or levied high customs on those of their subjects. These formed in some instances no inconsiderable sources of their revenue. The arrival of European navigators, therefore, was not only welcomed, but sometimes the event was celebrated with pomp and magnificence. Gama, in writing an account to Europe of his first reception at Calicut, says, 'They little think in Portugal what honours are done us here.' Cabral, in the same manner, was received, not only favourably, but with the warmest expressions of joy. In both cases, it is true, this harmony was soon interrupted; but this was owing, according to their own statement, entirely to the misrepresentations of the Arab merchants, who were jealous of being supplanted by them. Are we sure that the Arabs misrepresented them, and that these accusations had no foundation? Certainly some of the measures which they took, admitting them, as they say, to have been adopted in their own redress, were of a very violent nature, and such as might reasonably have excited the suspicion and enmity of the Native governments. From the beginning of their appearance in India, the proceedings of the Portuguese were of a description to cause the most unfavourable impressions of European nations. Subsequently, the attack upon Ormuz by their celebrated commander Albuquerque, without the slightest alleged ground of quarrel, his capture of a ship of Calicut, immediately after the conclusion of peace with the Zamorin, and the regular system of piracy which he carried on, seizing every vessel he met, exhibit a systematic violation of all the rights of nations, to which it would be difficult to find a parallel. By these and other means, not much more justifiable, the Portuguese succeeded in establishing an extensive dominion. It would, however, have been wonderful if that nation had not become, under such circumstances, the object of general dread and aversion among the powers of India." (Appendix 20, pp. 299-300, *Report from Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, Vol. VI, printed in 1832).

Japan, and their flag waved triumphantly over many Eastern lands. They were masters of Mangalore, Cochin, Ceylon, Ormuz, Diu, Goa, and Negapatam. They came out with the intention of trading n the East and they were content when they succeeded in that object. For over a century they monopolised the profitable traffic of the Indian Seas, and the Portuguese adventurers astonished Europe with the colossal and gigantic fortunes they had rapidly amassed.*

But the inhabitants of those places in India which came under the rule of the Portuguese were groaning under the yoke of that nation. Writes an Euglish author :

"There is in fact nothing whatever either in their own histories or in the accounts of the travellers to show that the Portuguese ever took any trouble to protect or raise the condition of their native subjects as Shivaji did in the Seventeenth Century. With this fact may be mentioned their great establishments of domestic slaves brought in Portuguese ships from the African Settlements and distributed at very low prices all over their Asiatic possessions......To this institution of domestic slavery may no doubt be ascribed the strain of Negro blood frequently perceptible in the Goanese." Nairne's *History of the Konkan*, p. 54.

The Portuguese were the first Christian nation of Europe to acquire political power in India, and they tried to maintain it by the policy of "divide et impera"—by playing off one state against another on the Malabar coast, where they landed and were warmly received by its rulers and people. It was thus that they prevented the Zamorin of Calicut from uniting the several states under his suzerainty.

To the credit of this Christian nation, it should, however, be said that the armies of Indian reigning sovereigns and princes were taught the use of fire-arms and drilled and disciplined in the European methods of warfare by them. They anticipated Clive and Dupleix by employing Indian troops under European command to maintain their power.

* Bruce writes that "the leading object of their (Portuguese) policy was to obstruct the transit of Indian produce to Europe by the Gulfs of Arabia and Persia, and to monopolise the whole of the Indian trade, by diverting it from these ancient channels, into their circuitous navigation, which would so increase the quantities and diminish the price, as to annihilate the former line of the trade, and thus render commerce subservient to that political influence, which the European art of war had given them, over many of the states bordering on the peninsula of Hindustan, and over the islands in the farther Indian Seas." (*Annals of the Honourable East India Company*, Vol. I, p. 41.)

In the letter from Lieut-Colonel Walker to Mr. B. S. Jones, already referred to above, it is stated that,

"The Dutch give accounts, no less flattering, of the favourable reception which they experienced from the Native Sovereigns. This was indeed enhanced by the general disgust which the violence and injustice of the Portuguese had inspired. They found no obstacle, it appears, to the erection of forts, except the unwillingness of the natives to work at them, but if they chose to erect fortifications themselves, full permission was given. It does not appear that this nation, in their conduct to the natives, ever proceeded to such extremities of violence as the Portuguese. For a long time weak, and struggling at home for their independence, they were obliged to exhibit at least a show of moderation, and to consult the favour of the inhabitants. The outrages by which their conduct in India was marked were committed chiefly against the rival European nations. It is worthy of remark, that the Dutch established their power in India by forming alliances with the Native princes, by serving as auxiliaries, and by subsidiary engagements, resembling in their principle and their result those which have since been pursued with much greater success by the English Company." *Report from Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, Vol. VI, (p. 300, printed in 1832.)

They did not make short work with the Indians as did their co-religionists of Spain in America. It was, therefore, providential that the sea-route to India was not discovered by any other Christian nation knowing the use of fire-arms. Had the Spaniards under Columbus succeeded in discovering India, it is possible that its inhabitants would have been as badly treated as were the Peruvians and the Mexicans.

The Portuguese waned in importance in the East as they grew rich and rolled in wealth. "The Portuguese," says Alfonzo De Souza, Governor of India, in 1545, "entered India with the sword in one hand and the crucifix in the other; finding much gold, they laid aside the crucifix to fill their pockets, and not being able to hold them up with one hand—they were grown so heavy, they dropped the sword, too; being found in this posture by those who came after, they were easily overcome."

The Dutch supplanted the Portuguese in the Eastern seas, taking their colonies and burning their ships. At present, Goa is the only well-known territory in India belonging to Portugal.*

V

THE DANES IN INDIA†

The Danes originally established their trade in Bengal in 1698,§ and paid 30,000 rupees in ten annual instalments for their *farman*, which was granted to them by Prince Azim-us-shan, grandson of the Emperor Aurangzeb. In 1755 they obtained from the Nawab of Bengal, through Mons. Law, the French Agent at Kasimbazar, a *parwana* for the erection of a factory at Serampore. They occupied altogether 60 bighas of ground at Serampore and Akua, and the Danish flag was hoisted at Serampore on October 8, 1755.

When Shiraj-ud-daula passed down the river with his army towards Calcutta for punishing the English for having fortified Calcutta and given protection to Krishna Das, son of Raja Rajballabh, he sent across the water to order Soetwan, the Danish Governor, to join the army with all his troops, cavalry, infantry and artillery; to which the Governor replied, that he had neither horse, foot nor guns, but was living in a miserable mud hut, with only two or three servants.

The settlement grew and flourished under the predominance of European influence in Bengal. At the close of the American war, England was involved in hostilities with

* Father H. Heras has contributed an article to the *Journal of the Bombay Historical Society*, for March 1928, on 'The Decay of the Portuguese Power in India.' According to him it was due to the destruction of the Vijayanagar Empire, English opposition, Dutch enmity and bad Government in Portugal.

† The source of all the information contained in this section is *The Good Old Days of Honorable John Company*, by W. H. Carey, 1887.

§ According to V. Smith, the principal settlement of the Danes at Serampore dates from about 1676

North America, France and Holland, and English vessels were exposed to the attacks of privateers, and English trade subjected to very heavy insurances. These were the golden days of Serampore commerce.

In 1801, in consequence of hostilities between England and Denmark, Serampore was sequestered by the English authorities, but was restored almost immediately after, at the peace of Amiens.

In 1808, the sun of Danish prosperity set for ever in Bengal. England robbed Denmark of her fleet at Copenhagen, and a detachment of British troops crossed over from Barrackpore and took possession of Serampore. It was restored at the pacification of Europe in 1815, but the Danish East India Company was then on the verge of bankruptcy.

For many years past the settlement had been maintained only by draining the home treasury. So, at the beginning of 1844 Serampore and Tranquebar were transferred to the British Government for the sum of twelve lakhs of rupees.

V

THE DUTCH IN INDIA

The Dutch came to trade with India towards the close of the sixteenth century. As long as they owed allegiance to Spain, Lisbon was the market from which they purchased Indian merchandize. But when they threw off the yoke of Spain and when in 1580 the Spanish and Portuguese dominions were united under the Spanish Crown, Lisbon was closed against them and they were thus deprived of Indian goods. Their ships were confiscated and the owners imprisoned. One of these Dutch prisoners, who had been a captain of a sea-going vessel, heard the story of India and of the Eastern lands and seas generally from the Portuguese sailors. He made his escape from prison and returned to his native land. The Dutch are well-known for their phlegmatic temperament. But the manner in which this captain gave to his countrymen an account of the luxuries and riches gained by the Portuguese by their trade in the East, fired their imagination and they immediately fitted out eight vessels for the East. Of these four were to sail by the Cape of Good Hope and the rest by the North-eastern passage.

It is necessary here to explain what was meant by this North-western, North-eastern or Northern passage. When the maritime nations of Europe were anxious to trade with India by the direct sea-route, they were ignorant of general geography. Columbus thought he had discovered India by sailing due West. Vasco da Gama took the Southern route. Other nations, like the English and the Dutch, thought they would reach India by the Northern passage. Of course, as could be anticipated, these voyages were unsuccessful, but certain islands, straits, etc., of the Northern latitude were thus discovered. The Dutch discovered Nova Zembla.

The four Dutch vessels which went to the East by the route of the Cape of Good Hope reached Java, and the Dutch were enabled to open trade with the East. However, it was not till 1598 that the Dutch firmly established themselves in the East

Indies. At Pulicat and Sadras, which are respectively to the North and South of the present Madras, they established their factories and built fortresses. By and by, they built their factories in other parts of India. The famous French traveller, Bernier, writing from Delhi, under date the 1st July 1663, says, "The Dutch have a malt factory in Agra, in which they generally keep four or five persons", and further on he mentions "the Dutch establishments at Bengal, Patna, Surat or Ahmedabad."

The Dutch prospered as long as they confined their energies to a steady prosecution of commerce. They carried on an extensive trade in Bengal and established themselves at Chinsura in 1675. The settlement of Chinsura was subordinate to that of Batavia.

But at last, they got tired of commercial pursuits. They aspired to rule India. They wanted to oust the English from the land of Ind. But without fighting any regular battle the English had the satisfaction to nip in the bud the rising hope and ambition of the Dutch.

After the battle of Plassey, Bengal passed into the hands of a Muhammadan traitor named Mir Jafar. This *man had betrayed his master and thus curried* favor with Clive and his comrades. He was made Nawab of Bengal. But he was merely a puppet in the hands of Clive and other Christian merchants in Clive's suite. He did not like this interference in the exercise of his despotic powers. He tried to get rid of the English and for this purpose secretly encouraged the Dutch to import troops. A large fleet arrived from Batavia, consisting of seven ships, three of thirty-six guns, three of twenty-six and one of sixteen, with 1100 troops, European and Malay. Clive saw through the intent of the Dutch adventurers. It was clear to him that his puppet Mir Jafar had instigated the Dutch to bring their fleet up the Hugli to assist him (Mir Jafar) to throw off the yoke of the English. At that time, these Christian nations were at peace. However, Clive perceiving the intention of the Dutch, ordered one of his officers, named Colonel Forde, to attack the Dutch army and prevent its reaching Chinsura. Forde met and discomfited the Dutch. The Dutch were thus baffled in their attempt to supplant the English. From this time onward the trade of the Dutch in India commenced to decline. Their settlements in India were a mere burden on their finances and, therefore, they resolved to dispose of them. In 1805, the East India Company exchanged Sumatra with the Dutch for Chinsura and Malacca. In India proper, no remarkable relics remain of the old Dutch settlements, and many educated Indians are ignorant that this nation once aspired to establish their supremacy in India.

VI

THE ENGLISH IN INDIA

As mentioned before, Lisbon became the great market for Indian goods when the Portuguese discovered the sea-route to India. The English became jealous of the Portuguese. At that time, Bristol was coming into prominence as a great sea-port of England. Its sailors, as descendants of the old sea-king robbers, were great pirates and adventurers;

In 1527, Robert Thorne, a merchant and sometime Mayor of Bristol, addressed a memorandum to King Henry VIII, advising the opening of a route to India by the North-west. Bristol should never be forgotten by the student of the history England or of that of India. That city has been the means of connecting the East and the West, bringing England and India into close union. It was one of its citizens who was the first to suggest to the English sovereign to trade with India by the direct sea-route. It was again in Bristol that the first Indian leader of thought who visited England died and lies buried: Bristol contains the bones of the great Rajah Ram Mohun Roy. As years roll on and Indians learn hero-worship, Bristol is destined to become a place of pilgrimage to educated Indians.

For over half a century, English sailors tried hard to reach India by the North-west passage. But all these attempts ended in failure. In 1578, Sir Francis Drake captured a Portuguese vessel that was returning to Lisbon from India. He plundered her. In the plunder, he found charts which revealed the secret of the route to India round the Cape. In 1594, Sir John Lancaster doubled the Cape of Good Hope and reached Java. The Company which had been formed to trade with the East received its Charter in A. D. 1600 from Queen Elizabeth, under the title of "Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies."

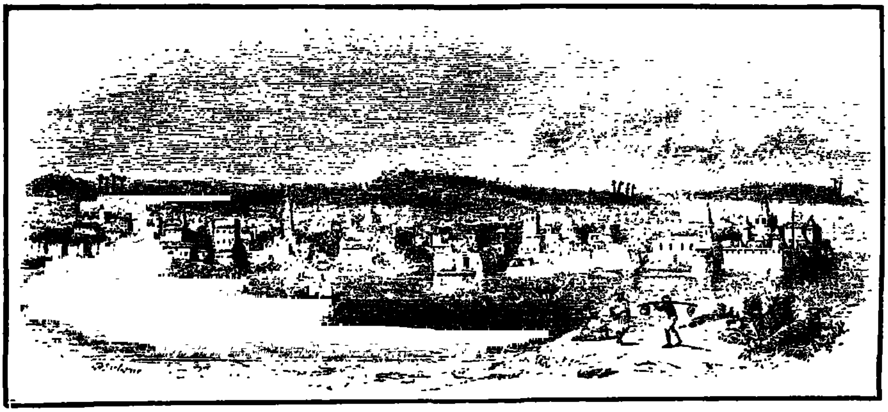
It is a notable fact that the Charter granted by Queen Elizabeth was to the "Society of Adventurers" which became constituted into the East India Company.

The Directors of this Company, on consultation, resolved *"not to employ any gentleman in any place of charge,"* and requested "that they might be allowed to sort their business with men of their own quality, lest the suspicion of the employment of *gentlemen* being taken hold upon by the generalitie, do dryve a greate number of adventurers to withdraw their contributions." (Minutes, 3rd October, 1690, quoted in Bruce's *Annals of the Hon'ble East India Company*, Vol. I p. 128.)

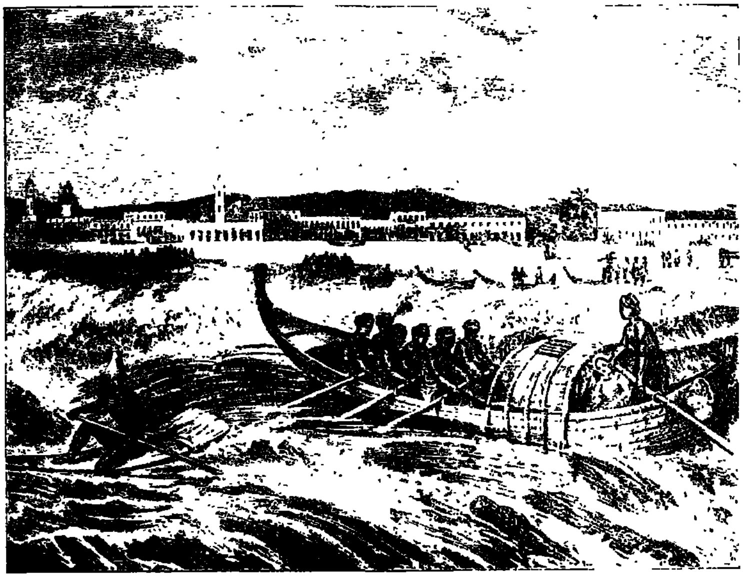
Sufficient emphasis has not been laid on the nature of the constitution of the East India Company; for the fact should be remembered that it was a Society of Adventurers who fought shy of having "gentlemen" for its members. This fact would account for the transactions, deeds or misdeeds of the Christian merchants and their representatives or servants in their dealings with the non-Christian races of the East. The Company, to the very last day of its existence, consisted of adventurers many of whom hardly deserved being called gentlemen. Adventurers, as a rule, do not observe any code of morality or ethics or show traits of good breeding.

The first native of England to set foot on Indian soil was Captain Hawkins. In 1608, in his ship the *Hector*, he cast anchor at Surat. He had a letter from James I, then king of England, to the "great Moghul." So he went to Agra. Jahangir, who was then the Great Mughal, treated him very hospitably, and it is related that a Christian Armenian woman was given in marriage to Hawkins. But Hawkins had soon to return to Surat, as he found the Portuguese Jesuits at the Emperor's Court were intriguing against him.

In 1612, Captain Thomas Best was sent out with a squadron of four ships armed for war. He attacked the Portuguese squadron at Surat and captured their fleet. The Portuguese being beaten, Surat fell into the hands of the English, thus raising their national



General view of Surat



General view of Madras

prestige in the East. On February 6th, 1613, a treaty was arranged with the Emperor Jahangir, by which it was agreed that an ambassador should reside at the Mughal Court, and permission was granted to the English to establish a factory in Surat. Sir Thomas Roe was the first English ambassador at the Court of the Great Mughal, who laid the foundation of English trade with India.

Besides Surat, the English established other factories on the Western Coast, and in 1628, founded one at Armegaun, seventy miles north of Madras. In 1640* permission was granted to the English for the factory at Calcutta. Before that time, the trade of Bengal was in the hands of the Portuguese, who a few years previously had incurred the displeasure of the Great Mughal for carrying on traffic in slaves and setting the Nawab of Bengal and his officers at defiance. Hearing of their high-handed conduct, Shah Jahan, who was then the Great Mughal, sent an army against the Portuguese. The Portuguese were defeated, their settlement at Hugly destroyed, their ships burned, and numbers of them sent to Agra as prisoners. On the destruction of the Portuguese, the English were anxious to get the trade in their own hands. They applied for and obtained permission to trade in Bengal. But they had to pay heavy duties and their ships were obliged to anchor at Pipli near Kedgeri and not allowed to come up the Hugli.

There is a story† that in 1644 Jahanara, a favorite daughter of the Great Mughal at Agra, was severely burned. The Court physicians and surgeons could not effect a cure. Shah Jahan despatched a messenger to Surat, desiring the services of one of the English medical practitioners. The English settlers selected Mr. Gabriel Boughton. By his skilful treatment the burns of the princess were healed. Shah Jahan asked him to name his own reward. The patriotic Englishman requested that the East India Company might be allowed to trade in Bengal, free of duty, to establish factories in the province and also that the Company's ships be allowed to come up the Hugli. The Great Mughal granted the farman. Mr. Boughton carried it himself to Bengal, and arrived at Raj Mahal, where Shah Shuja, second son of Shah Jahan, held his Court as the Viceroy of Bengal. At that time, one of Shah Shuja's ladies was lying seriously ill. Boughton succeeded in curing her. Shah

* Malleson says 1644. But other authorities give the date as 1640.

† Dr. C. R. Wilson does not give credit to this story. In a footnote at p. 12 of his *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, Vol. I, he writes :

"The initiation of the trade with Bengal is usually ascribed to a farman supposed to have been granted to the English by Shah Jahan on the 2nd February 1644, allowing them liberty to trade in Bengal, but confining them to Pipli. I have taken no notice of the story for the following reasons..."

Vincent Smith also discredits the story, saying:

"The familiar story made current by Orme and Stewart to the effect that Jahanara was cured by an English surgeon named Gabriel Boughton (Bowden), who refused any reward other than a grant of trading privileges to the E. I. Co., cannot be true. The ship *Hopewell* did not arrive at Surat until September 1644. Jahanara's accident occurred in March (O. S.) of that year, and her cure was completed in November. According to the Surat letter dated January 3, 1645, Boughton, 'late chirurgeon of the Hopewell,' was nominated then for duty at Agra. *It follows that he must have been at Surat all* the latter part of 1644 and that he travelled to Agra in 1645 (Foster, *Ind. Ant.*, 1911, p. 254)."

Shuja, out of gratitude, afforded every assistance to Boughton in carrying out his scheme for establishing the trade in Bengal on an efficient and permanent basis.*

The island of Bombay was presented by Portugal to Charles II in 1661 as a dowry of Catherine of Braganza, who was the legal mistress of his harem. In 1688, it was sold to the East India Company.

Thus the East India Company established its factories on the Eastern as well as the Western coasts of India, and as a trading corporation was a great success. Immense fortunes were made by every one connected with the Company in any capacity. The ambition to rule India, or to bring India under the sway of England, had not yet entered the heads of the calculating adventurers constituting the East India Company.

Sir Thomas Roe was deputed as an ambassador from the English King to the Mughal Emperor. He reached Surat on the 26th September, 1615, and obtained the grant of important privileges from the Mughal Emperor in favour of the English.

Sir Thomas told the servants of the Company that in India they should live frugally and like merchants and send their wives to their native land.

At first the Company adopted Roe's views. But it was in the reign of that dissolute and profligate king of England, named Charles II, that the Company were invested with political powers. That sovereign granted the Company a charter, bearing date the 3rd of April, 1661, and vesting in them authority to make peace and war with any prince or people, not being Christians. Thus it would be observed that the spirit of the crusaders was not then extinct in the natives of England. They drew the line of demarcation between Christians and non-Christians. Non-Christians were looked down upon as infidels and, as such, no regard was to be paid to their rights, properties or persons. It is for this and other reasons that the term Christian has been used in this history to designate the natives of England, because their beloved sovereign, Charles II, meant that his subjects of England should be thus known.

However, the idea of acquiring supreme power in India did not originate with the English. Mill, in a footnote to Chapter I of Book IV of his History of British India writes :

"The two important discoveries for conquering India were : 1st, The weakness of the native armies against European discipline ; 2ndly, the facility of imparting discipline to natives in the European service. Both discoveries were made by the French."

It was the French who "first broke the spell which held the Europeans in subjection to the native powers." At Madras in 1746, the French with only 1200 men defeated the whole army of the Nawab of the Carnatic, who had invested the place.

It was Dupleix and his doings which showed the English the way to establish their

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* "English prospects were much improved by the efforts of Gabriel Boughton, surgeon of the Company's ship *Hopewell*, who since 1645 had lived as court physician with the Mughal *Subadar or viceroy* of Bengal. In 1650 he obtained from his patron a licence for the Company to trade in the province, and in the following year an English factory was established at Hughli, where the Portuguese and Dutch were already settled. But misfortunes still dogged the Bengal stations. They were too far from Madras to be effectively controlled. The factors sent there fell into irregular and dishonest courses."—*History of British India* by Roberts, p. 38.

authority over the princes and people of Hindustan. Dupleix suffered, for trying to carry out his scheme, at the hands of his own countrymen. But the East India Company, with great zeal and vigour, adopted Dupleix's policy. Robert Clive, in the service of the East India Company, gave effect to this policy. Not to be thwarted in his attempt by the French, he declared that "so long as there was one Frenchman in arms in the Deccan there could be no peace." It was all plain sailing for Clive and the East India Company when the French were got rid of.

The commencement of the political supremacy in India of the Christian merchants of England dates from their winning the battle of Plassey in 1757.

VII

THE FRENCH IN INDIA

The French were another Christian nation that came out to trade with India by the direct sea-route. For this purpose, a company named *"Compagnie des Indes"* was formed in 1664. The credit of organising this company belongs to the French Minister Colbert. He succeeded in inducing the French monarch, Louis XIV, to grant many concessions and privileges to this company. An exclusive right of commerce with India for fifty years, an entire exemption from taxation, the Government guaranteeing the company from all loss during the first ten years, were some of the privileges conferred on this company.

In 1668 the French established a factory at Surat. Masulipatam was founded a year later and Pondicherry in 1674. The founder of Pondicherry was Francois Martin. He resided here till his death in 1706. He succeeded in making friends with Indian princes by the conciliatory policy he adopted. He was succeeded by Dr. Lenoir, who endeavoured to carry out the peaceful policy of his predecessor. His successor, M. Dumas, took a world of pains to make Pondicherry agreeable to any of the Indian rulers who visited it, and he thus formed the friendship of Dost Ali Khan, the famous Nawab of the Carnatic. He initiated the policy towards establishing a Christian empire in India, a policy which his successor Dupleix tried to carry out. He supported Dost Ali and his son-in-law, Chanda Saheb, against the Marathas, who were at war with them. To support himself in the expected conflict, M. Dumas greatly strengthened the fortifications of Pondicherry, raised a force of 1,200 Europeans and also a body of 4,000 or 5,000 Indians, who were armed and drilled in the European manner, thus forming the first known Sepoy corps. The Marathas were thus baffled in their exertions to wrest the Carnatic from Dost Ali. The Marathas were a terror to the Mugal Emperor of Dehli. When, therefore, he heard of the stand which M. Dumas had made against the Marathas, the effeminate representative of the house of Taimur was much pleased at the intelligence. He conferred the title of Nawab on Dumas and also the command of 2,000 horsemen as a guard. He was officially recognised as an officer of the Mughal empire.

He was succeeded in October, 1741, by Joseph Francois Dupleix in the governor-

ship of Pondicherry. Dupleix was a remarkable man, possesing great talents and unbounded ambition, and was, like Napoleon, a born leader of men. He was the first native of Europe who aimed at establishing a Christian empire in India. Historians are agreed that he would have succeeded in his attempt to bring India under French sway, but failed because his superior genius provoked the envy and malice of his own countrymen. France did not like the policy by which Dupleix planned to conquer India. France preferred peace to the glory of an empire.

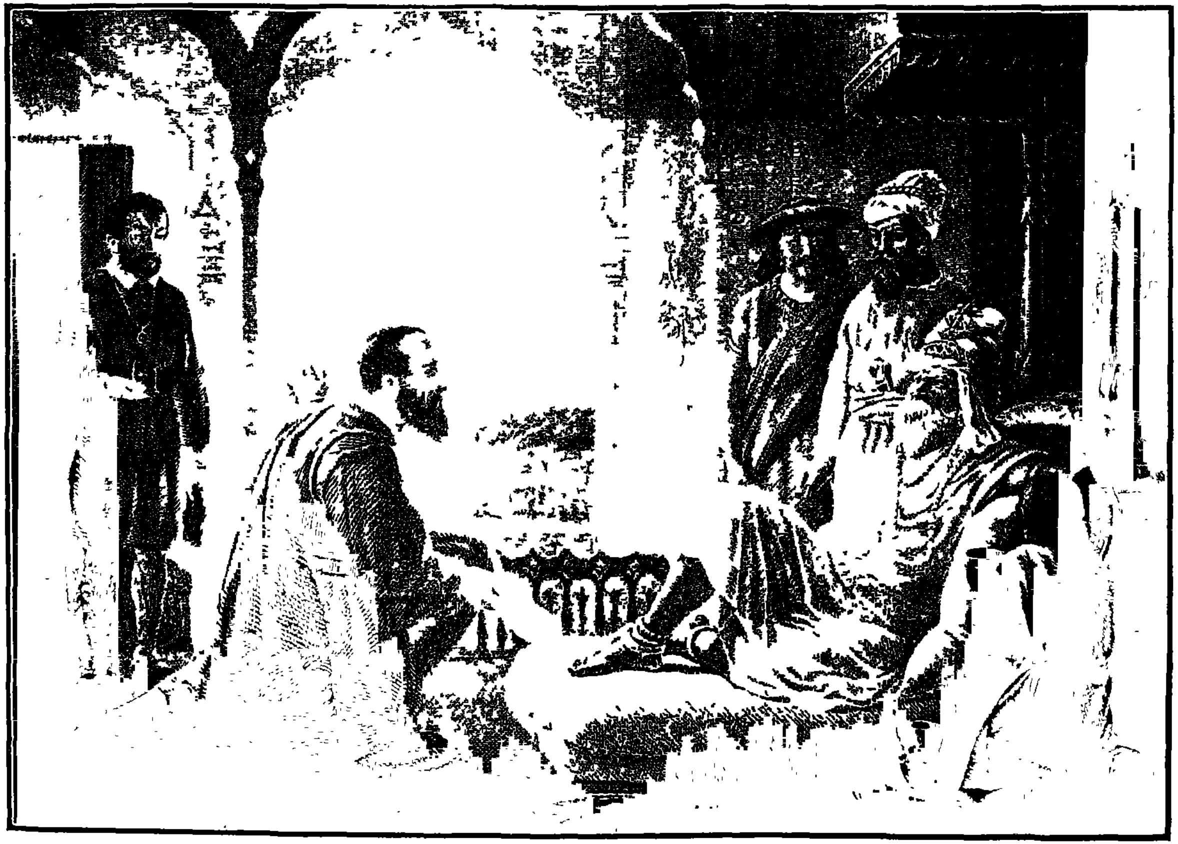
Dupleix, when he assumed the reins of office, proclaimed himself as Nawab, a title which, as mentioned above, had been conferred on his predecessor M. Dumas, by the Mugal Emperor at Delhi. Soon after this, France and England were involved in war. Madras had been over a century in the hands of the English and at this time, this was their principal seat of commercial enterprise in India. To crush the English trade rivalry Dupleix determined to capture Madras. He despatched a French sailor, by name La Bourdonnais, to carry out his design. La Bourdonnais sailed to Madras and captured it with little difficulty.

Dupleix and the French sailor were not on very friendly terms. In fact, they were rivals and jealous of each other. Dupleix, finding that the Nawab of the Carnatic suspected his aggressive policy, announced that he was anxious to give up Madras to that prince, after dismantling its fortifications. But La Bourdonnais, without consulting Dupleix, ransomed the town to the English, receiving himself a present of £ 40,000, and then withdrew with the fleet from the Indian shores. To the Nawab of the Carnatic Madras was not restored by Dupleix. The promise given in the ear was broken to the heart. So the Nawab attacked Madras. But Dupleix succeeded in dispersing the Nawab's forces by means of his artillery. This happened on 4th November, 1746.

Dupleix now threw off the mask and showed himself in his true colours. The Nawab of the Carnatic, chagrined and defeated by Dupleix, sought the alliance of the English to gain his cause. The English, under Admiral Boscowen, attacked Pondicherry in 1748. Dupleix was once more successful. To make his triumph widely known, Dupleix instantly despatched messengers to Arcot, Hyderabad and even to Delhi to inform the ruling sovereigns of those places, how the English were routed at Pondicherry by the French. He was receiving congratulations from all sides when the news of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle arrived, in consequence of which he was obliged to surrender Madras to the English with its fortifications greatly strengthened. Thus was rudely shattered the long-cherished hope of Dupleix to expel the English from the Carnatic.

The English East India Company and the French *Compagnie de Indes,* notwithstanding that England and France were at peace, each kept an army in the field to fight the battles of any Indian prince who required their services, not with the intention of helping him, but to strike a deadly blow at its European rival.

Soon an opportunity presented itself, when the French and the English marshalled their forces to espouse the cause of contending Indian princes. Sahoojee, the Hindu Raja of Tanjore, was expelled from his principality by Chanda Saheb. To recover his



Vasco da Gama and the Zamorin of Calicut

throne, he asked the assistance of the English, offering them, at that time, a large sum of money and the cession of the town of Devicotta. Chanda Saheb had been taken prisoner by the Marathas and Tanjore was ruled by one Pratap Singh, when the English went to the assistance of Sahoojee. The people of Tanjore were quite happy under Pratap Singh and did not like the return of Sahoojee. So the English took Devicotta by storm and pensioned off Sahoojee, and entered into an alliance with Pratap Singh.

Dupleix saw how the English were daily growing in power. Hence, he ransomed Chanda Saheb from the Marathas and tried to put him on the throne of the Carnatic, the Nawab of which, Anwar-ud-din, as mentioned above, had after being defeated by Dupleix when he attempted to possess himself of Madras, allied himself with the English. This prince had succeeded Dost Ali, who was the patron of Dumas. Chanda Saheb was the son-in-law of Dost Ali. Hence, Dupleix was anxious to set him up on the throne of the Carnatic. Chanda Saheb, with the help of the French, fought Anwar-ud-din, and defeated and killed him, in the battle of Ambur, on the 3rd of August, 1749. This success brought Dupleix a new ally in the person of Muzaffar Jang. This prince had been kept a prisoner by his uncle Nazir Jang, but he made his escape and joined Chanda Saheb, and with the alliance of Dupleix, proclaimed himself Subedar of the Deccan—an office in virtue of which, on a mere reference to Delhi, he could create or remove all his subordinate rulers or Nawabs, such as the Nawab of the Carnatic, etc.

Trichinopoly, a town with a strong fort, was in the possession of Muhammad Ali, a son of Anwar-ud-din. Dupleix turned his attention to acquiring Trichinopoly. He directed Muzaffar Jang and Chanda Saheb to attack Trichinopoly. But these two princes did not carry out Dupleix's behest. Instead of attacking Trichinopoly, they attacked Tanjore. They did not succeed in capturing Tanjore. They were put to flight by Nazir Jang, the uncle of Muzaffar Jang. The latter submitted to his uncle, who again imprisoned him, proclaimed himself Subedar and, deposing Chanda Saheb, made Muhammad Ali, son of Anwar-ud-din, Nawab of the Carnatic. Dupleix, however, managed by his secret agents to get Nazir Jang assassinated. Thus again Muzaffar Jang was made by him Subedar of the Deccan, and Chanda Saheb, Nawab of the Carnatic.

But Trichinopoly was still in the hands of Muhammad Ali, who was supported by the English. It was besieged by Dupleix and his French troops. But defended by Lawrence, it defied the efforts of the French and their allies. Trichinopoly has been truly said to have been the rock upon which the towering ambition of Dupleix was wrecked. Fate was against him. He did not spare money or men to capture Trichinopoly. To add to his misfortunes, a reinforcement of 700 men from Europe perished at sea. The French and the English Companies, as well as the ministers in Europe, came to the conclusion, that there would be no peace between the English and the French as long as Dupleix remained in India at the head of the French affairs. The French ministers were acquainted with the game Dupleix was playing in India, for Duplex had revealed to them the plan by means of which he would succeed in bringing India under the rule of France. They considered Dupleix's policy a villainous one. Hence, they

recalled him to France in 1754. All his dreams of the Franco-Indian Empire came to nothing. He was disgraced and died in comparative poverty.

After the recall of Dupleix, France determined not to interfere in the internal affairs of Indian princes. M. Godehen, who was sent out to succeed Dupleix, made a peace with Mr. Saunders, the then English Governor of Madras. It was stipulated that the two Companies henceforth "should never interfere in the differences that might arise among the princes of the country." France kept the promise to the very letter. But the English honoured it more in the breach. The French Company came to an end in 1769. Pondicherry and Chandernagar only have been left to the French as their possessions in India.

The French have not been a great colonising nation and have not been successful in planting many colonies. This is perhaps greatly due to their being on the whole an honest people, for colonisation requires the practice of fraud and treachery on the part of its authors. However, the French are very popular among and much liked by the people of Algiers. These Arabs are becoming Frenchified, and it is probable that in the course of a generation, they will give up their own language for that of France. This is not to be wondered at, "for the chief national virtues of the French people," as Lecky tells us, "result from an intense power of sympathy, which is also the foundation of some of their most beautiful intellectual qualities, of their social habits, and of their unrivalled influence in Europe.

No other nation has so habitual and vivid a sympathy with great struggles for freedom beyond its border. No other literature exhibits so expansive and œcumenical a genius or expounds so skilfully, or appreciates so generously, foreign ideas. In hardly any other land would a disinterested war for the support of a suffering nationality, find so large an amount of support."

It may be all a day-dream of Victor Hugo when he wrote that

"in the twentieth century, there will be an extraordinary nation. This nation will be great...... The capital of this nation will be Paris...... The nation does not yet exist, but its capital is already here...... The function of Paris is to spread ideas. Its never-ending duty is to scatter truths over the world, a duty it incessantly discharges, Paris is a sower, sowing the darkness with sparks of light. It is Paris which, without a pause, stirs up the fire of progress...... Search the whole world through, it is ever upon the deck of Paris that one may best hear the flapping and quivering of the full-spread, invisible sails of human progress."

The above may be all a patriotic rhapsody on the part of Victor Hugo, but it does not require any stretch of imagination to conceive what India would have been like to-day, had France occupied the position which England does now in India. Had the French driven out the English, almost the whole of India would have been Frenchified by this time.

Bishop Heber, who travelled through northern India during the middle half of the last century, recorded the popularity of the French in India, in the following words:

"I took this opportunity of inquiring in what degree of favour the name of the French stood in this part of India, where for so many years together, it was paramount. I was told that many people were accustomed to speak of them as often oppressive and avaricious, but as of more conciliating and popular manners than the English Sahibs. Many of them, indeed,...... had completely adopted the Indian dress and customs and most of them were free from that exclusive and intolerant spirit which makes the English, wherever they go, a caste by themselves, disliking and disliked by

all their neighbours. Of this foolish, surly, national pride, I see but too many instances daily, and I am convinced it does us much harm in this country. We are not guilty of injustice or wilful oppression ; but we shut out the natives from our society, and a bullying, insolent manner is continually assumed in speaking to them."* (Heber's *Indian Journal*).

It is, therefore, natural to expect that the French would have perhaps succeeded in completely Frenchifying and absorbing the races which inhabit Hindustan.

VIII

WHY THE ENGLISH SUCCEEDED

Thus we have seen that the natives of England were not the first or the only Christian nation to come out to India. There were the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes and the French in India. But how was it that the English succeeded in establishing their power in India while the others failed to do so ? The history of the rise of their power illustrates the principle of the survival of the fittest. Because the English adjusted themselves to their environment and the circumstances of the situation, therefore, they survived. The Portuguese were more or less religious fanatics who wanted to impose their religion on the peoples of the country with whom they came in contact. They were reared on the traditions of the Inquisition and they established that institution at Goa. It was in this way that they alienated the sympathies of the inhabitants of those territories in which they had established themselves.

Although the French showed the way to the conquest of India, they were too honest to pursue the policy chalked out by Dupleix. Moreover, they were intolerant of the caste prejudices of the Hindus and therefore did not succeed in winning their hearty co-operation in their attempt to establish their supremacy in this country.

The Dutch and the Danes do not seem to have achieved success in gaining political power in India.

But the case was quite different with the English. A certain British officer, subscribing himself as *Carnaticus,* wrote in the *Asiatic Journal,* for May, 1821 :

"We must at once admit that our conquest of India was, through every struggle, more owing to the weakness of the Asiatic character than to the bare effect of our own brilliant achievements ; and empire after empire rolled in upon us when we were merely contemplating the protection of our trade, or repelling insult. Kingdoms have been vacated for us, as if by magic spell ; and on the same principle we may set down as certain that whenever one-twentieth part of the population of India becomes as provident and as scheming as ourselves, we shall run back again, in the same ratio of velocity, the same course of our original insignificance."

But it should be remembered that the whole of British India or its greater portion was never conquered by England. The natives of that country never came out to India in the *role* of conquerors. In the introduction to his *Political History of India* Sir John Malcolm wrote :

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* The account of the French in India given in this book is based mainly on Colonel Malleson's writings.

"Force and power could not have approached the shores of India without meeting with resistance; but to the unpretending merchant every encouragement was offered; and when the spirit with which the early settlers defended their property from spoliation showed that they were as superior in their military as their commercial character, they became more an object of admiration than of jealousy to the principal powers of India, who in process of time courted their alliance and aid against each other." (P. 2).

The following warning of his to his co-religionists and compatriots should be always borne in mind by them:

"For if, in the pride of power, we ever forget the means by which it has been attained, and, casting away all our harvest of experience, are betrayed by a rash confidence in what we may deem our intrinsic strength to neglect those collateral means by which the great fabric of our power in India has hitherto been supported, we shall with our own hands, precipitate the downfall of our authority." (p. 7)

William Howitt wrote:

"The Indian natives were too powerful and populous to permit the Europeans to march at once into the heart of their territories, as they had done intorSouth America, to massacre the people, or to subject them to instant slavery and death.........They (the English) went out.........not as mere adventurers, but as sober traders, aiming at establishing a permanent and enriching commerce with those countries; and if Christianity, if the laws of justice and of humanity were to be violated, it must be under a guise of policy, and a form of law."*

On the assumption that India was acquired by conquest country, there were a few Englishmen who did not justify the conquest. In *"Justice for India"*—a letter to Lord Palmerston, by *"A Plain Speaker,"* believed to have been Dr. Congreve, the well-known leader of Comte's cult of positivism in England, it is said:

"Our conquests in the East have been without the excuses with which ambition generally contrives to gild its delinquencies: for, sundered as we are by so prodigious a distance from India, we had no old grudges to avenge upon her, no mischief, no danger to apprehend from her; she belonged to one sphere, we to another. Our first relations with her were simply commercial; we crossed the seas to trade with her; we were kindly and hospitably received by her; we were permitted to build factories upon her coasts; but, alas for her! we found her weak, unwarlike, and disorganized—and therefore we conquered her. We conquered her just as the Spaniards conquered Mexico and Peru, with the same cupidity and eagerness for aggrandisement, with the same treachery, and almost with the same inhumanity." (P. 49)

But India, as a whole, is not a conquered country, for England never conquered her. The very idea of the conquest of India was repugnant to the people of England, as expressed more than once in Parliamentary Acts. As far back as 1793, on the occasion of the renewal of the East India Company's charter, it was stated in no ambiguous language that

"To pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of this nation," &c.

The English never conquered India by the sword as the Muhammadans had done. It is the object of this history to narrate the manner in which they attained their political power in India. It is, however, necessary here to indicate the secrets of the establishment of their supremacy in this country.

That without the co-operation of the natives of this country, no foreign Christian

* *The English in India—System of Territorial, Acquisition* by William Howitt.

Dupleix

Labourdonnais

nation could hope to rise to power, was a fact discovered by the French. Dupleix, who was a man of genius, found that patriotism, as that term is understood in the Christian countries of the West, did not exist in India. Indians were divided among themselves, and so it was not difficult to pit one class against another. They were not devoid of intelligence and physical courage, and hence it was easy to train them in the European method of warfare.

The weaknesses of the Indian character, as exhibited in their simplicity, and faithfulness and devotion to their leaders and their trusting nature, made them easy victims to the wily scheming merchants of England. Colonel Malleson, in the opening chapter of his well-known work on "The Decisive Battles in India," has referred to the causes which have brought about the establishment of British supremacy in India. He writes :

"The story of the rise and progress of the British power in India possesses peculiar fascination for. . . it lays bare the defects in the character of the native races which made their subjugation possible, it indicates the trusting and faithful nature, the impressionable character, the passionate appreciation of great qualities, which formed alike the strength and weakness of those races—their strength after they had been conquered, their weakness during the struggle."

The "heathens" of India were hypnotised by the sanctimonious appearances and smooth and specious promises of the British "adventurers" who came out to India. There is a proverb in Hindustan that the tusks of the elephant are for show only, while the teeth for mastication remain invisible. Unfortunately the "heathen" Indians did not understand in time the true nature and character of those British "adventurers." Hypocrisy is the undeclared creed of almost all adventurers. William Howitt writes :

"Mr. Auber, in his 'History of the British Power in India,' has quoted largely from letters of the Board of Directors of the Company, passages to show how sincerely the representatives of the East India Company at home have desired to arrest encroachment on the rights of the natives ; to avoid oppressive exaction ; to resist the spirit of military and political aggression. They have from year to year proclaimed their wishes for the comfort of the people ; they have disclaimed all lust of territorial acquisition; have declared that they were a mercantile, rather than a political body ; and have rebuked the thirst of conquest in their agents, and endeavoured to restrain the avidity of extortion in them. Seen in Mr. Auber's pages, the Directors present themselves as a body of grave and honourable merchants, full of the most admirable spirit of moderation, integrity, and benevolence ; and we may give them the utmost credit for sincerity in their professions and desires. But unfortunately, we all know what human nature is. Unfortunately, the power, the wealth, and the patronage brought home to them by the very violation of their own wishes and maxims were of such an overwhelming and seducing nature, that it was in vain to resist them. Nay, in such colours does the modern philosophy of conquest and diplomacy disguise the worst transactions between one state and another, that it is not for plain men very readily to penetrate to the naked enormity beneath. . . . .the mode by which the East India Company has possessed itself of Hindustan, is the most revolting and un-Christian that can possibly be conceived. . . .if ever there was one system more Machiavelian—more appropriative of the show of justice where the basest injustice was attempted—more cold, cruel, haughty and unrelenting than another, it is the system by which the government of the different states of India has been wrested from the hands of their respective princes and collected into the grasp of the British power. . . .Whenever we talk to other nations of British faith and integrity, they may well point to India in derisive scorn. . . . . .The system which, for more than a century, was steadily at work to strip the native princes of their dominions, and that too under the

most sacred pleas of right and expediency, is a system of torture more exquisite than regal or spiritual tyranny ever before discovered, such as the world has nothing similar to show."*

It was thus that the simple-minded Indians were imposed upon and made to part with their liberty and earthly possessions. They compared, therefore, the rise of the East India Company to suzerainty in India with the activity of white ants.

"Some native sage has compared the Europeans in India to *dimaks* or white ants, which from dark or scarcely visible beginnings, pursue their determined objects insidiously and silently, destroying green forest trees, and in their excavated trunks building edifices, communicating by numerous galleries with the hardened clay pyramids, far and near, that denote where formerly flourished the far-spreading cedars. Attacking everything, devouring everything, they undermine and sap and desolate. The simile is not a very flattering one, though it is not in some measure without its aptitude either. . . . . After all, however, there can be no question that in our early connection with India, there was much from the contemplation of which, the moralist will shrink, and the Christian protest against, with abhorrence."**

The rise of the Christian power in India is not a little due to the fact that the East Indian Company and its agents and servants violated the terms of the treaties they had solemnly entered into with the non-Christian powers of India, whenever it was convenient or to their interest to do so. It was in this manner that those Indian princes who entered into alliance with them always came to grief. William Howitt writes :

"A fatal a friendship, indeed, has that of the English been to all those princes that were allured by it. It has pulled them every one from their thrones, or has left them there the contemptible puppets of a power that works its arbitrary will through them. But friendship or enmity, the result has been eventually the same to them. If they resisted alliance with the encroaching English, they were soon charged with evil intentions, fallen upon and conquered ; if they acquiesced in the proffered alliance, they soon became ensnared in those webs of diplomacy from which they never escaped without the loss of all honour and hereditary dominion—of everything, indeed, but the lot of prisoners where they had been kings."†

The same writer has also said :

"What then is this system of torture by which the possessions of the Indian princes have been wrung from them ? It is this—the skilful application of the process by which cunning men create debtors, and then force them at once to submit to their most exorbitant demands. From the moment that the English felt that they had the power in India to 'divide and conquer,' they adopted the plan of doing it rather by plausible manoeuvres than by a bold avowal of their designs, and a more honest plea of the right of conquest—the ancient doctrine of the strong, which they began to perceive was not quite so much in esteem as formerly."††

In speaking of the conquest of Sindh Kaye wrote in *The Calcutta Review*:

"The Sindh Ameers, it is said, violated treaties. It would seem as though the British Government claimed to itself the exclusive right of breaking through engagements. If the violation of existing covenants ever involved, *ipso facto*, a loss of territory, the British Government in the east would not now possess a rood of land between the Burhampooter and the Indus."§

Colonel Malleson summed up the causes of the Indian Mutiny in two words—"bad faith." Yes, it was "bad faith" on the part of the East India Company to have

* *Locum cit.*

** *The Calcutta Review*, Vol. VII (1847). p. 226.

† *Loc. cit.*

†† *Ibid.*

§ Vol. I. [illegible]

broken all the solemn engagements and treaties they had made with the non-Christian peoples of India which brought about the Indian Mutiny and the extinction of that society of "Adventurers."

The fatal mistake which most of the Indian rulers committed was the entertainment in their service of officers of various European nationalities. They were never loyal to the salt they ate and were too glad and ready to betray their masters, to whose rescue they never came in their hours of trial and trouble. True it is that some of the rulers of European countries benefited their subjects by the employment in their services of adventurers of foreign nationalities. Thus, the late Mr. Grattan Greary, a well-known journalist of Bombay, wrote :

"As every one knows, Peter the Great regenerated Russia with the counsel and assistance of Swiss and Scottish and German adventurers. Frederick the Great employed French financiers to administer the fiscal system of the Prussian monarchy."*

But the case was different with the "colourless" adventurers serving coloured masters, whom they did not scruple to betray when it paid them to do so.

The planting of British Residents in the courts of the Indian rulers was one of the main causes of the political success of the East India Company in this country. The importance of this fact has not been laid so much stress upon by writers of Indian History as it deserves to be.

One of the objects of sending Residents to the courts of Indian Princes was to foment domestic dissensions. Thus, in his history of the Marathas, Grant-Duff writes that

"Mr. Mostyn was sent to Poona by the Bombay Government, for the purpose of...using every endeavour, *by fomenting the domestic dissensions or otherwise* to prevent the Mahrattas from joining Hyder or Nizam Ally."†

The words put in italics tell their own tale and need no comment.

In the *Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings,* that Governor-General thus characterized the conduct of a "Resident at the Native Court."

"Instead of acting in the character of ambassador, he (the Resident) assumes the function of a dictator, interferes in all their private concerns ; countenances refractory subjects against them ; and makes the most ostentatious exhibition of this exercise of authority. To secure to himself the support of our Government, he urges some interest which, under the colour thrown upon it by him, is strenuously taken up by our Council ; and the Government identifies itself with the Resident, not only on the single point, but on the whole tenor of his conduct."§

M. D. Kavanagh, Esqr., LL. D., of the Middle Temple, Barrister-at-Law, published in 1884, a work entitled "A few cases illustrating British Rule in India." In the preface to this work (p. iii), he wrote :

"The Company, when they formed political alliance with the Native Powers, made Treaties with them, one of the stipulations being that no Englishmen, no Frenchmen, no Americans, nor any other Europeans should, not only not trade, but even not reside within the native territories,....... These extraordinary, most selfish, unexampled and anti-international arrangements, so forced upon the Princes, have not only assisted British residents at the native Courts in worming themselves into the

* *Travels,* Vol. I. p. 250.

† *History of the Mahrattas,* p. 340 (Times of India Edition, Bombay, 1873.)

§ Panini Office reprint, pp. 26-27.

domestic affairs of the Princes for barring all the access of natives, and for coercing the Princes under trivial pretexts and in point of fact, degrading them into mere state-prisoners,—but also failed not to create a system of plottings, intrigues, prevarications, mistrust, and mendaciousness in which both natives and British residents, with a few brilliant exceptions, still equally participate."

Dr. Kavanagh adduced several instances in support of his statement. Then he wrote (p. iv).

"It is, moreover, notorious that the British residents demean themselves so far as to pry, for sinister purposes, into the private amusements of the Princes ; thus for instance, there may be seen exhibited in the Oude Blue Book such wretched trash as the following :—'May 17th. This morning the King received the obeisance of his eunuchs and courtiers, and amused himself with some pigeons. March 30th. Last evening the King passed his time in witnessing the performance of dancing girls. May 11th. Last evening the King amused himself with letting off some fire-works. This morning he made a present of shawls and kerchiefs to Mosahibali, a fiddler, and an African female. May 23rd. Six persons have been employed to catch cats for the King,' and so on, *ad infinitum.*"

Regarding the doings of the Resident at the court of Satara, the *British Friend of India Magazine* for March, 1843, wrote :—

"Now, the fact stands forth palpably, on the record, that Major Ovans did buy evidence ; virtually, though not in these broad terms. *Moreover, had he not done so, then he would have failed in the duty regularly expected by the Company from their Residents at native courts.* How did the Company acquire Bengal, but by perjury and forgery ? Or Arcot, or any other principality ?"

The words put in italics in the above extract need no comments.

The eighth Duke of Argyle, who was Secretary of State for India in the serventies of the last century, wrote :

"The demands these officers (Political Residents) have made on native governments, the interferences they have practised with native rule, the reports they have sent up of native abuses and native administration have been the usual and regular preliminaries of British annexation."

In his "Notes on Indian Affairs" the Hon'ble Mr. F. J. Shore very truly observed :

"So extremely difficult is it to discover the slightest benefit arising from the establishment of Residents at the native courts, that there is even ground for the supposition that the measure has been adopted and maintained for the express purpose of promoting misgovernment and confusion in the different principalities, so as to afford plausible excuses and opportunity for our taking possession of them."

Political agents or residents, as a class, were not honest. If they were and hesitated to do the dirty work of occidental diplomacy, they were given short shrift and most unceremoniously removed from their appointments. Instances will be found in the pages of this work.

The system of "subsidiary alliance" was designed to wipe out the independent existence of Indian States. This is evident from the opinions expressed by some of the very competent British officers to the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Committee appointed in 1832. Thus, according to W. Russell, who was, during nearly 21 years, Resident or Assistant Resident at Hyderabad, the subsidiary system led inevitably to the ultimate destruction of the state which embraced it. In his opinion, under this system, the Nizam was dying comatose, while the Peshwa had expired in convulsions.

In a letter addressed by Sir Thomas Munro to Lord Hastings, dated the 12th August, 1817, it was stated that the

Sambhaji, son of Sivaji

Sir Thomas Roe at the Court of Jehangir

Nawab Aliverdi Khan

"Inevitable tendency (of the subsidiary system is) to bring every native state into which it is introduced, sooner or later, under the exclusive dominion of the British Government...... have no doubt that the subsidiary system must everywhere run its full course, and destroy every government which it undertakes to protect."

The grant of concessions by Indian rulers to foreign Christian traders was one of the causes of the rise of the British supremacy. An American writer has very truly said:

"The most refined methods of annexation are through loans and railways. The difference between police protection and an army is a line that has never been pointed out......China was no less dismembered by the change in concessionaires who were really conquerors.*

The ruin of Indian trades and industries as well as the political downfall of India may be said to have dated from the day when the Mughal Emperor with the generosity and magnanimity characteristic of an Asiatic sovereign granted such terms to the foreign merchants of the British nationality trading in India as no modern Christian power would ever think of giving to any Christian or non-Christian people. Under the guise of traders, the foreigners conspired for the conquest of India.

The influence of sea-power on history has been very ably dealt with by the American writer, Captain Mahan. But the fact that India possessed an indigenous navy of her own and the destruction of this navy paved the way to the rise of the Christian power has not been pointed out as yet by any writer on Indian history. In a paper on the Maratha Navy contributed by me to the well-known Bengali monthly *Prabasi,* Vol. IV, No. 8, pp. 442-445, I tried to show that the destruction of that navy in 1756 A. D. by the British under Admiral Watson and Colonel Clive greatly contributed to the success of that nation in planting their power in this country.

IX

GERMAN ENTERPRISE IN BENGAL

It is perhaps a little known fact at the present time that the Germans made a determined attempt to find a footing in Bengal a hundred and fifty years ago. The English, the French, the Dutch and the Danes had set up their factories on the banks of the Hooghly in the latter half of the seventeenth century, but even by the middle of the eighteenth their hold was but a precarious one. Subject at any moment to attack from the Moghul Empire, whose power, it is true, was waning, but whose prestige still stood high, they clung tenaciously to the ground they had won, mutually jealous of one another and by no means inclined to view a new comer with a favourable eye. Europe many years before had rung with the exploits of the four nations in the golden land of the East Indies, and it is strange, considering the trading proclivities of the Hanseatic towns, that the merchants of the great central empire entered the field so late.

It was not till 1751 that a company of merchants from Empden joined in the great race for wealth and founded a company for trade in the East. Empden is a town on the North Sea coast close to the boundary between Germany and Holland. The Bengalische Hendels-Gesellschaft, which was also known as the Bengal Company of Empden, the Empden East India

* *Industrial and Commercial Geography,* by J. Russell Smith. New York. Henry Holt and Company, 1913.

Company, and the Royal Prussian Bengal Company, was finally founded under a charter of 1753, and an attempt was at once made to gain a footing in Bengal. The news of their coming, however, had preceded them and they were soon to discover that they were regarded as interlopers and by no means welcome to the other European nations, especially to the English and the Dutch. Though ready to quarrel among themselves, the latter quickly combined against the new comer, with whom they were determined not to share any of the profits of their lucrative trade in Bengal. The Court of Directors in England apparently gave the first warning to its subjects in the Bay even before the Empden merchants had started on their voyage, and for once the Court of Directors and the Calcutta Council were in cordial agreement.

In a letter to the Court of Directors, dated September 6th, 1754, the Calcutta Council state that they had forbidden pilots, masters and mates and all Company's servants to give any assistance whatever to the Prussian merchants. The other European settlements on the Hooghly took the same course. The English and the French had evidently taken counsel together, for in a letter, dated August 27th, 1754, the Director and Council at Chandernagore wrote to the English Council promising to do everything in their power to prevent the merchants expected from Empden from making a settlement in Bengal. A few days later the Dutch Director and Council followed suite.

The Moghul authorities were at first equally anxious to keep out yet another European nation. They were doubtless, justified in considering that the four nations which had already established themselves in the Bay had given them sufficient trouble. The Nawab, therefore, hearing of the coming of the Prussians, wrote strongly to the English Council. "If the Germans come here," he wrote, "it will be very bad for all the Europeans, but for you worst of all, and you will afterwards repent it ; and I shall be obliged to stop all your trade and business... ... ...Therefore take care that these German ships do not come." For once also the English Council and the Nawab were in agreement and the former wrote back breathing the pious wish—"God forbid that they should come, but should this be the case, I am in hopes they will be either sunk, broke or destroyed."

In spite, however, of the hostile reception that awaited them, the Prussian ships, the largest of which was the *Prince Henry of Prussia*, arrived and the little company of traders established themselves on the banks of the Hooghly. Their chief appears to have been one Mr. John Young, who was evidently an Englishman, and who afterwards entered the English Company's Service. Their factory stood a mile south of Fort Orleans, the French settlement at Chandernagore, and here they carried on their trade, obtaining permission from the Nawab to do so on payment of the usual custom duties. They were further allowed to construct dwelling houses and warehouses for their goods, though strictly forbidden to erect fortifications or to maintain troops. The Nawab with his usual vacillation appears to have changed his mind and for the moment to have smiled upon the new company. Doubtless in his hostility to the English he was disposed to look with favour upon anything in the nature of a rival to them. On his way down to Calcutta Siraj-ud-daula extorted five thousand rupees from the Prussian factory and they must have been thankful to escape with so light a punishment. Two months later, while the English were still exiles at Palta, the only ship the newcomers then possessed, the *Prince Henry of Prussia*, was completely wrecked while entering the estuary of the Hooghly.

Insignificant as the Prussians were however, the Court of Directors at Home still lived in fear of them and in the following year sent out orders again forbidding all trade with them. The Company's servants were directed not to give to them any help whatever except the "usual assistance of water, provisions or real necessaries." Unable to make headway against the hostility it met with on every side, the Prussian Company was soon afterwards wound up. The proceedings of 21st August 1760 record a letter from Mr. John Yonng, the former chief of the Prussian Factory, who had deserted it, requesting the Calcutta Council to take into its possession all the effects of the Royal Prussian Bengal Company.*

Abridged from an article in *The Statesman* of May 21, 1916.

X.

FLEMISH ENTERPRISE IN BENGAL

The Ostend Company was a Flemish Company established under the patronage of Austria. Being desirous of participating in Indian trade, some of the merchants at Ostend, Antwerp and other Flemish towns of the Austrian Netherlands sent out on their own private account six ships laden with merchandise for the East Indies somewhere about the year 1719. One of these ships was destined for Bengal and so successful was the enterprise that the merchants concerned determined to form a company and to apply for a formal charter. The Flemish merchants applied to Nawab Murshid Cooly Khan for permission to erect a factory. Ther Nawab received the request of the Flemish captain with consideration and assigned to him the village of Banki Bazar. So much promise of success was there in this first tentative undertaking that the Ostend Company was formed in 1722 under the auspices of the Emperor and in the following year the *Emperor Charles*, a ship of considerable size, carrying thirty guns, set out to put the fortunes of the new company to the test. Unhappily the ship, after completing the long voyage in safety, was sunk at the entrance to the Hooghly. Fortunately the larger portion of her cargo was saved as well as the officers and crew, who were able to proceed to Banki Bazar and take possession of the site that had been given to them for their factory. Banki Bazar on the east bank of the Hooghly is now known as Garulia and lies opposite Bhadreswar just south of Chandernagore. Undeterred by the misfortune that had befallen the *Emperor Charles* three ships of a larger size were despatched in the following year and for a time the prospects of the Ostend Trading Company appeared favourable.

The Ostenders left no stone unturned to put their little settlement in a state of defence. The wall had bastions at the angles and a deep ditch was cut communicating with the river which was of so great a depth that it allowed ships of considerable draught to take refuge in it in case of need.

So strong was the opposition aroused that France, England and Holland finally prevailed upon the Emperor to withdraw his charter in 1727, an agreement being arranged that all trade between the Ostend merchants and the East Indies should cease for seven years. The Ostend merchants, however, who had laid foundations of so lucrative a trade at Banki Bazar, were by no means willing to accept the edict of the Emperor and they continued to carry on their traffic in spite of his edict. Having failed to oust them by intrigues at home, the other European nations determined to take the matter into their own hands. Their invocation of the Emperor's authority having failed in its effect, there remained the Moghul authority in Bengal, and to the Nawab they turned for help against the interloper.

When, after a naval engagement and after besieging Banki Bazar, the Nawab's men entered the fortified factory of the Ostenders,

nothing was found except some cannon balls and a few shells. The walls and bastions were at once dismantled and the factory buildings razed to the ground. No trace of the Ostend Company was left, and beyond the fact that a little strip of land on the river bank is still known as the Prussian Garden, the Royal Prussian Bengal Company and the Ostend Company have left no visible remembrance of their presence behind them in the Bengal of to-day.*

XI

WHY THE BRITISH DOMINION TOOK ITS RISE FROM BENGAL

In the preface to the first volume of his *Early Annals of the English in Bengal,* Dr. Wilson wrote:

"We have yet to understand why it was from Bengal, not from Madras, or Bombay, that the English dominion took its rise." (P. vii).

* Abridged from an article in *The Statesman* of May 21, 1916.

No writer on Indian History has made any attempt to answer this question satisfactorily.

Sir Alfred Lyall, in his *Rise of the British Dominion in India,* writes :—

"To advance into Bengal was to penetrate India by its soft and unprotected side."

But the above-named author should have remembered that his compatriots did not obtain their footing on the soil of Bengal by conquest. The English established themselves first at Surat, then at Bombay and Madras, before they came to Bengal. But they found Bengal more fertile than any other part of India. They came to see the advantages that would accrue to them from trading in Bengal. Hence they asked for concessions for trade there from the Mughal Government. The grant of these concessions firmly established the English in Bengal. The foundation of Calcutta by Job Charnock in 1690 was not accidental, but was due to the experience of half-a-century's trade in that province. He understood the importance of Calcutta as a trade centre and also its importance from the military and strategical point of view*

The Mughals had no navy worth the name. The coasts of Bengal were invaded and their inhabitants constantly plundered by Christian pirates of the Portuguese nation. On account of the Maratha navy, the English could not make such an advantageous settlement on the Western Coast as they did on the Eastern.** This must have been understood by Job Charnock and his other co-religionists and campatriots when they were laying the foundation of Calcutta as the centre of their trade in the East.

The fabulous wealth of India was, as it were, hoarded in Bengal and the English were fortunate in thus finding their way there.

They attached themselves to the natives of that province by their businesslike habits and by trying to administer even-handed justice to those who came under their jurisdiction in the new settlement of Calcutta. In concluding the introductory account of the early history of the English in Bengal, Dr. Wilson writes:

"The effect of the English settlement on the natives of the country is not very noticeable in the story as far as I have brought it, yet this perhaps is the most important point of all. In Calcutta the English made many of their first experiments in ruling India..........Poor and unworthy as the administration of the early settlement may seem in modern eyes, we can have no doubt that it presented a very favourable contrast to the government of the surrounding districts, a contrast which was not forgotten in 1757."†

The reputation the English earned for themselves at Surat, where they had established their first factory in India, would be evident from the following:

"As the number of adventurers increased the reputation of the English ;was not improved. Too many committed deeds of violence and dishonesty............Hindus and Mussalmans considered the English a set of cow-eaters and fire-drinkers, vile brutes, fiercer than the mastiffs which they brought

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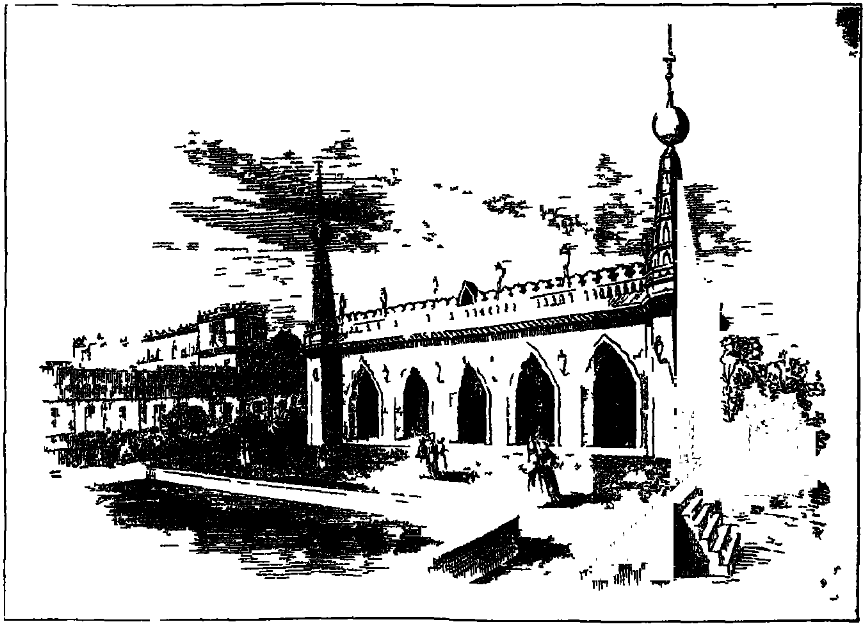
* Wilson's *Early Annals of the English in Bengal,* Vol. I. pp. 127 *et seq.* For an account of Job Charnock see the Indian Atheneum, Vol. I. No 1, July 1923, pp. 23-31.

** Sindh also possessed a navy of its own. This was a very efficient one. For an account of this Navy, see *Asiatic Journal,* Vol. XXVI, January 1837, p. 26. Very few people know of the existence of this Navy.

† *loc. cit.* , Vol. I p. 117.

Mohammad Ali Khan, Nawab of Carnatic



The Royal Palace of Arcot

with them, who would fight like Eblish, cheat their own fathers, and exchange with the same readiness a broadside of shot and thrusts of boarding pikes, or a bale of goods and a bag of rupees."*

The estimate which the people of Western India had formed of the English and of Christianity has been thus described by the writer quoted above:

"But according to Terry, the natives had formed a mean estimate of Christianity. It was not uncommon to hear them at Surat giving utterance to such remarks as: Christian religion, devil religion, Christian much drunk, Christian much do wrong, much beat, much abuse others. Terry admitted that the natives themselves were very square, and exact to make good all their engagements; but if a dealer was offered much less for his articles than the price which he had named, he would be apt to say:—'What! dost thou think me a Christian, that I would go about to deceive thee?' "**

Dr. C. R. Wilson writes:

"The English in Bengal were equally notorious for their quarrels, the natural outcome of the prevailing eagerness to make money and the spirit of espionage fostered by their masters, who were pleased that their servants should tell tales of one another. The old Viceroy Shayista Khan, called them 'a company of base, quarrelling people and foul dealers'; and our great modern authority will not gainsay that the noble had good grounds for his assertion. The impression of the moral and social tone of the Company's servants in the Bay which has been left on the mind of Sir Henry Yule by his exhaustive study of the records of the time is 'certainly a dismal one' and he has found it hard to augur from their prevalent character at this time the ultimate emergence among the servants of the Company of such men as Elphinstone, Munro, and Malcolm, Henry and John Lawrence, Martyn and Heber." †

The misdeeds of the English in Western India and Bengal were not unknown to their masters at home. But the East India Company tried to impress on their servants in Bengal the importance of behaving properly and trying to appear righteous, and fair and just to the people who had come under their jurisdiction. Writes Dr. C. R. Wilson:

"Happily the Directors had a better idea as to how their financial position at Calcutta might be improved. They saw that the revenues would increase with the population and that the population would increase if the Government was just and the town safe and healthy. The Court declared again and again that righteousness is at the root of prosperity. 'Let your ears be open to complaints and let no voice of oppression be heard in your streets. Take care that neither the broker, nor those under him, nor your own servants use their patrons' authority to hurt and injure the people. Go into the different quarters of the town and do and see justice done without charge or delay to all the inhabitants. This is the best method to enlarge our towns and increase our revenues'."§

The mask of sanctimoniousness which the Company's servants put on in Bengal early in the eighteenth century deceived the natives of that province as to the real character of the adventurers in their midst. They judged them from their outward appearances. They placed their implicit confidence in them. This confidence and this trust explain the rise of the Christian power in Bengal.

After the British had obtained political power in Bengal, it was not difficult for

* *The English in Western India* by Rev. Philip Anderson. (P. 22).

** *Ibid*, p. 32.

† *Loc. cit.* Vol. I, p. 66. It is proper here to say that Malcolm, Elphinstone, Munro and John Lawrence were as great adepts in occidental diplomacy as Clive and Warren Hastings.

§ *Loc. cit. Vol. II, Part I, p. lxix.*

them to maintain it. Thus, Governor Verelst wrote to the authorities of the East India Company :

"The first and great cause of our security is the general indigence of the Mogul empire. The invasion of Nadir Shah gave the first stroke to its power and opulence. . . . . .

"The natural consequence of these circumstances has been, that the different native powers find their finances narrow, and their treasures unequal to the maintenance of a respectable army, or the prosecution of a war of any duration. Whenever, therefore, they are urged by ambition or necessity to enter on any expedition, they assemble new levies for the purpose with the most unreflecting precipitancy; they risk everything on one campaign, because they have seldom resources for a second ; and come to an engagement at all events, because the consequences of a defeat are less terrible than those which must ensue from the desertion or sedition of an ill paid and disaffected army. . . . .

"These circumstances, I apprehend, gentlemen, have been very principal sources of our repeated victories over these immense Asiatic armies, which have fled before a handful of your troops ; and these will, I trust, either deter others in future, or ensure success against any who may be desperate enough to brave a force like ours, so strengthened by discipline, and rendered formidable by uninterrupted success.

"A second, and no less powerful reason for the security of our situation, is the discordancy of the principles, views and interests of the neighbouring powers ; and which must ever defeat any project of accomplishing, by an association, what the wealth and power of a single one must prove unequal to. The majority of the present princes of Hindustan have no natural right to the countries they possess. . . . . .conscious that the maintenance of their usurped authority depends on their preventing any of the members from being too much depressed, or too much elevated, they become jealous and suspicious of each other, and ever ready to throw in their weight againt any one whom they see rising too high above the common level. For this reason, they at first looked on our successes with an evil eye ; still our generosity to Suja-u-daula, our attention to our treaties and public faith, and, above all, our moderation in not pursuing our victories, begot a confidence in us they had not in their countrymen, and made them rather ambitious of our friendship than jealous of our power.

"Thus circumstanced, it will alway be easy for a watchful and active administration on our side to hold the general balance of Hindustan, and crush every combination in the bud, by spiriting up some neighbouring power, who may be either ill disposed, or at least not favourable to the confederates."*

Britishers are never tired of writing and saying that they have established "Pax Britannica" in India—that India did not exist as India until they went and established their supremacy there. Regarding the prevalence of anarchy in India, a writer, presumably an Englishman, wrote as follows :

"Anterior to the era of British rule in the East, this country, it is true, had been immemorially scourged by foreign invasion, or torn by domestic anarchy and violence, But the least meditation on the history and elements of human societies will make it abundantly evident, that a very broad gulf intervenes between anarchy and annihilation ; and that even in the full roar and spring-tide of violent and bloody periods, the communities of the earth are steered onwards, by an unseen hand, through healthful revolutions to regeneration and prosperity.......During the era of Muhammadan domination, towns and villages were sacked and burnt, and vast multitudes perished and were blotted from the face of the earth by sword, fire, and famine. But gradually a spirit of resistance sprang up in men's hearts, and the homes and properties of countless millions were preserved by the valour and wisdom of their own struggles. This is no speculation. It is a true allusion to a real and living

* Talboys Wheeler's *Early Records of British India,* pp. 376-378.

principle of protectiveness, rooted out, in a great measure, from the provinces under British sway but seen in active operation in Native States. In Oude, for instance, anarchy and violence may be called the law of the principality. Nevertheless, men continue to people the face of the soil. The population is undiminished. Annihilation makes no progress even in the footsteps of sanguinary feuds and open rapine. Affairs find a real and powerful adjustment by the principle of resistance and self-defence ; and it may be safely averred, that even the ceaseless struggles, which prevail in that turbulent kingdom, denote a political and social frame of more healthful vigour and activity, than the palsied lethargy of despair, which characterizes the festering and perishing masses under the rule of the British. If national annihilation be indeed attainable by mere human wickedness or human errors, we hesitate not to declare our solemn opinion, that British India is lapsing more visibly towards its gulf than any other community of the earth."*

* (*The Calcutta Review*, Vol. I (1844), pp. 190-191).

CHAPTER I.

SHIRAJ-UD-DAULA

The rise of the British East India Company's supremacy in India is inseparably connected with their treachery towards and conniving at, if not actually instigating, the assassination of Shiraj-ud-daula. That unhappy prince ascended the throne, not of his fathers but of one who was himself an usurper. His maternal grandfather Ali Vardi Khan was a soldier of fortune—a free lance who rose to power by means which are justified in statecraft on the ground that everything is said to be just and fair in love and war. Ali Vardi tried to plant his dynasty in Bengal. But he knew the character of the East India Company's servants well. He knew their intriguing nature, their want of scruples and of sense of gratitude and their reputation for perfidiousness. His reign was not long, and, engaged as he was in checking the Maratha inroads, and suppressing other domestic troubles, he could not direct his attention to the uprooting of the English from his dominion. But if the warning of the wizard to Lochiel be true that

> "Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
> And coming events cast their shadows before.",

then Ali Vardi, when about to die, must have known the plot and conspiracy which the English in the disguise of traders were hatching against him and his dynasty.* The

* It is also not improbable that Ali Vardi Khan knew something of the designs of the English on the provinces which he governed from what one Colonel Mill of that race wrote to one of the Christian princes of Europe. In 1746, Colonel Mill submitted his scheme for the conquest of the three provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissa under the flag of the Emperor of Germany to Francis of Lorraine, the husband of Maria Theresa. He wrote :

"The Moghul Empire is overflowing with gold and silver. She has always been feeble and defenceless. It is a miracle that no European prince with a maritime power has ever attempted the conquest of Bengal. By a single stroke infinite wealth might be acquired, which would counterbalance the mines of Brazil and Peru.

"The policy of the Moghuls is bad ; their army is worse ; they are without a navy. The Empire is exposed to perpetual revolts. Their ports and rivers are open to foreigners. The country might be conquered, or laid under contribution, as easily as the Spaniards overwhelmed the naked Indians of America.

"A rebel subject, named Ali Verdi Khan, has torn away the three provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa from the Moghul Empire. He has treasure to the value of thirty millions sterling. His yearly revenue must be at least two millions. The provinces are open to the sea. Three ships with fifteen hundred or two thousand regulars would suffice for the undertaking. The British nation would co-operate for the sake of the plunder and the promotion of their trade. The East India Company should be left alone. No Company can keep a secret. Morever, the English Company is so distracted as to be incapable of any firm resolution." (Bolts' *Considerations of the affairs of Bengal*, Appendix).

A shrewd and far-seeing statesman as Ali Vardi was and kept fully informed of all that transpired

Nawab Siraj-ud-daula

English were a nation of shop-keepers and so were the Hindus. Bengal in the middle of the eighteenth century presented the spectacle of Christians intriguing with "heathens" for the overthrow of the Muhammadan power. S. C. Hill, in his Introduction to "Bengal in 1756-1757", wrote :

"The fact that the commerce and manufactures of the country were almost entirely in the hands of the Hindus naturally brought them into close connection with the European merchants who had settled in the country for the purpose of trade, and so produced a kind of tacit alliance based mainly upon their material interests "*

That the English had been intriguing with the Hindus long before the accession of Shiraj-ud-daula to the *masnad* of Bengal is evident from what one Colonel Scott wrote to his friend, Mr. Charles F. Noble, as far back as February, 1754. The latter in his letter to the Select Committee, Fort St George, dated 22 September, 1756, wrote .

"By what Colonel Scott observed in Bengal the *Jentue rajahs* and inhabitants were very much disaffected to the Moor Government, and secretly wished for a change and opportunity of throwing off their tyrannical yoke And was of opinion that if an European force began successfully, that they would be inclined to join them if properly applied to and encouraged, but might be cautious how they acted at first until they had a probability of success in bringing about a Revolution to their advantage "†

Here, of course, the wish is father to the thought. The Hindus of their own accord did not wish for a change. They were happy and prosperous under the rule of the followers of the Crescent. Thus even S. C. Hill is compelled to write :

"The accounts of Muhammadan rule by Muhammadan writers do not, I must own, show any signs of such misgovernment as would impel an oriental race to revolt—in fact, I think every student of social history will confess that the condition of the peasantry in Bengal in the middle of the eighteenth century compared not unfavourably with that of the same class in France or Germany "§

But the Christian English, to make them serve as their cat's-paw, intrigued with the "heathen" Hindus and they must have placed some temptations before the latter's eyes to make them discontented and throw off the yoke of the Muhammadans.

Colonel Scott was perhaps one of those who were intriguing with the "heathen" Hindus, for in the letter of Charles F. Noble to which allusion has already been made before, it is said :

"The Colonel was at great pains to procure a perfect knowledge of that Court, [Court at Murshidabad], government, country and people, and I believe few men knew it better than he did at his death

"As the Colonel was soon known to several of the greatest men of that country by means of Omy Chund (an eminent merchant at Calcutta and the best acquainted with the Company's affairs

in his satrapy by the host of informers and spies whom he maintained and liberally paid, it is not unreasonable to believe that he must have known of the designs which the Christians, especially of the English race, in the disguise of merchants trading in his dominion harboured against his principality. This perhaps accounts for his jealousy of the Christian traders whom it was his policy never to encourage or afford any preferential terms.

* Vol. I, p. xxiii.

† Ibid, Vol. III, p. 328.

§ Ibid, Vol. I p. xxiii.

and interest of any one in that country), he had several conferences with them, particularly with Raja Tilluchand of the Burdwan Country and Cozee Waszitt of Hugelie, who had mentioned his arrival to the Nabob."*

There can be no doubt that this Christian officer was intriguing with the "heathens." Ali Vardi Khan was naturally anxious to see him; it may be that in the interests of the State, he wanted to keep him a prisoner or take his life. But the Colonel did not see him.

"Colonel Scott was prepared and ready to go to Moxudabad (where the Nabob expected him) when he received the then Governor and Council's letter of Madras entreating him to come with all speed to their assistance upon the Coromandel Coast. On this he excused himself to the Nabob, in the politest manner,..."**

Ali Vardi Khan was naturally jealous of the English. Thus Monsieur Jean Law,† Chief of the French Factory at Kasimbazar, in his Memoir, wrote:

"He saw with equal indignation and surprise the progress of the French and English nations on the Coromandel Coast as well as in the Deccan, for by means of his spies he was informed of everything that happened there... But he was not free from anxiety. He feared that sooner or later the Europeans would attempt similar enterprises in his government.

"This disposition of the Nawab showed itself especially when he came to know by his spies that some fortification or other was being erected in Calcutta or Chandernagore. The least repair or the pulling down of a house near the Fort was enough to alarm him. An order was immediately issued to stop the work;... It would appear that his plan was to oblige all the European nations indifferenly to have no forts. 'You are merchants,' he often said to our and the English *Vakils*, 'what need have you of a fortress? Being under my protection you have no enemies to fear.' He would probably have tried to carry out his ideas if he had thought he would live long enough to finish the business, but he was old. Not wishing to risk anything *he contented himself with instructing his successor-elect in a line of conduct in which we have had opportunities of seeing what lessons he received from Ali Verdi Khan.*"††

In his dying speech to his successor-elect Ali Vardi, a far-seeing statesman that he was, and also as the sun-set of life gave him mystical lore, said:

"Keep in view the power the European nations have in the country. This fear I would also have freed you from if God had lengthened my days.—The work, my son, must now be yours. Their wars and politics in the Telinga country should keep you waking. On pretence of private contests between their kings they have seized and divided the country of the King [*i.e.*, the Moghul Emperor] and the goods of his people between them. Think not to weaken all three together. The power of the English is great; they have lately conquered Angria, and possessed themselves of his country; reduce them first; the others will give you little trouble, when you have reduced them. Suffer them not, my son, to have fortifications or soldiers: if you do, the country is not yours."§

Ali Vardi Khan died of dropsy on the 10th of April, 1756 and was succeeded by

* Ibid. Vol. III, p. 326.

** *Ibid.*, p. 326.

† In the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Part I—History, Literature, &c., No. II., 1867, in the article "Notes on Siraj-ud-daula," according to Mr. H. Blochmann *Law* should be Las. In the footnote on p. 89, he writes:

"In all English Histories of India known to me, his name is misspelt Mr. Law."

†† *Ibid.* Vol. III, pp. 161-162. The Italics are ours.

§ *Ibid.* Vol. II, p. 16. This speech was considered by many as a 'specious fable' invented by Mr. Holwell to serve his ulterior purpose. Vide *Ibid.* II. 129,162 and III, 352, 355.

Shiraj-ud-daula, who, from the records available, does not appear to have been at this time more than 24 years old.* Whether we regard the above speech of Ali Vardi Khan as 'a specious fable' or not, the fact remains that when the young prince ascended the throne of Bengal, his was not a bed of roses. The thorns which were pricking him were the trading natives of England. They were giving him trouble on every side. The English, it seems, had never any love for him. M. Jean Law, in his Memoir, writes :

"They (the English) never addressed themselves to Siraj-ud-dowla for their business in the Durbar, but on the contrary avoided all communication with him. On certain occasions they refused him admission into their Factory at Cossimbazar and their country houses,......."†

The English also slighted, if not deliberately insulted, him by not sending him any present when he ascended the throne of Bengal. William Tooke, in his Narrative of *The Capture of Calcutta,* wrote :—

"I have already observed by what means Seir Raja Doulet [Shiraj-ud-daula] came to the Nabobship, upon which occasion it is usual according to an old Eastern custom on being appointed Prince of the country to be visited by the different foreign nations and proper presents made him. This in the first place we neglected doing, and being a man of an infinite deal of pride and ostentation (although abandoned to all manner of vice) gave him no small vexation, not only by our slighting of him as we did but as there was very strong parties against him in the country which made him apprehensive we favoured some one of them."§

Of course, there can be no doubt that the English were intriguing and conspiring against him and that was the reason for their deliberately slighting him. Shiraj-ud-daula would have been less than a human being—not to say unmindful of his position as a sovereign—to have overlooked the manner in which the English insulted him. No wonder that he also harboured designs against them and tried to get rid of them from the dominions over which he ruled.

But there were other causes, besides the personal ones mentioned above, which left him no other alternative than that of making an attempt to drive the English out of his realms.

It cannot be denied that Shiraj-ud-daula had just grounds of being dissatisfied with the perfidious conduct of the English. It is an English proverb which says : "Give him an inch, and he will ask for an ell." The truth of that proverb was being daily exemplified in the behavior of the English towards the Nawab. One David Rannie, in his "Causes of the Loss of Calcutta," dated August, 1756, wrote:

"The injustice to the Moors consists in that, being by their courtesy permitted to live here as merchants, to protect and judge what natives were their servants, and to trade custom-free, we under that pretence protected all the Nabob's subjects that claimed our protection, though they were neither our servants nor our merchants, and gave our *dustucks* or passes to numbers of natives to trade custom-free, to the great prejudice of the Nabob's revenue, nay more, we levied large duties upon goods brought into our districts from the very people that permitted us to trade

* According to the *Muzaffarnama,* Shiraj was born in 1140 H. (Aug. 1727-July 1728) and ascended the masnad in 1169 (Oct. 1755-Sep. 1756). He was, therefore, according to that authority, 28 or 29 years of age at this time.

† *Ibid.* Vol. III, p. 162.

§ *Ibid.* Vol. I. p. 278.

custom-free, and by numbers of their impositions (framed to raise the Company's revenue) some of which were ruinous to ourselves,......caused eternal clamour and complaints against us at Court."*

The English set at defiance the authority of the Nawab by repairing and strengthening their fortifications in Bengal, especially those at Calcutta. The plausible excuse which they made was that, as a war was anticipated between the natives of England and those of France, it was for their safety and defence that the former were repairing and strengthening their fortifications. But if there was any truth in the plea, they should have acted on the advice given to them by the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

In the Court's letter, dated 29th December, 1755, they wrote:

"We must recommend it to you in the strongest manner to be as well on your guard as the nature and circumstances of your Presidency will permit to defend our estate in Bengal; and in particular, that you will do all in your power *to engage the Nabob to give you his protection* as the only and most effectual measure for the security of the Settlement and property."

But the English did not act on the advice contained in the words which have been put in italics in the above extract. As a matter of courtesy, which their conduct did not entitle them to expect from the Nawab, Shiraj-ud-daula wrote both to the French and the English to cease building any more or repairing the existing fortifications. M. Jean Law, Chief of the French Factory at Kasimbazar, wrote:

"I immediately drew up an *arzi* or request and had one of a similar character brought from Chandernagore. These two papers were sent to Siraj-ud-dowla, who appeared satisfied with them. He even wrote me in reply that he did not forbid our repairing old fortifications but merely our making new ones. Besides, the spies who had been sent to Chandernagore, having been well received and satisfied with certain presents, made a sufficiently favourable report for us, so that our business was hushed up."

But the English were determined to give trouble to the Moslem prince. Continued M. Jean Law in the Memoir from which the extract has been given above:

"It was not the same with the English. The spies of the Nawab were, it is said, very badly treated at Calcutta. Instead of trying to appease the Nawab,... ... ...the English made a very offensive reply to his order. I did not see it but trustworthy persons assure me it was so."

Then in a footnote, M. Jean Law added:

"The rumour ran that Mr. Drake replied to the spies that, since the Nawab wished to fill up the Ditch, he consented to it, provided it was with the heads of the Moors. I do not believe he said so, but possibly some thoughtless young Englishmen let slip these words, which, being heard by the *harkaras* or spies, were reported to the Nawab."

The English were insolent to the Nawab, because they had been intriguing with the Nawab Shaukat Jang of Purnia. The latter—a relative of Ali Vardi Khan—aspired to the throne of Bengal. He had procured by specious presents and promises from the Delhi Emperor, a *Sanad* conferring on him the Subahdari of Bengal, Behar and Orissa. He also very probably relied on the help of the English to gain his object and thus oust Shiraj-ud-daula. Shiraj-ud-daula had to march against him. Writes M. Jean Law:

"As he (Shiraj-ud-daula) feared some movement on the part of Shaukat Jang he marched against him. It was a mere pleasure party. The Nawab of Purneah, though brave, now showed as little firmness

Ibid. Vol. III. p. 384.

as the *Begam* (Ghasety). On the first news of Siraj-ud-daula's approach he sent presents accompanied by a letter in which he tried to justify himself against the rumours which had been current, and concluded by submitting himself to the clemency of his master. Siraj-un-daula granted him his friendship, or at least pretended to do so. It is said that it was now that he first saw clearly that the English were taking an important part in the intrigues of his enemies. I was assured that the Nawab of Purneah showed him some letters which he had received from them."*

There were other circumstances also which left no doubt in the mind of Shiraj-ud-daula of the conspiracy that the English had been concocting against him. They were harbouring in their settlement of Calcutta, a person named Krishna Das, son of Raj Ballabh. Raj Ballabh had fallen into the disfavour of Shiraj-ud-daula. To save his property from the sequestration of that prince, he sent his son Krishna Das, together with all the moveable property and the women of the household, to Calcutta. Raj Ballabh, whilst Dewan at Dacca, was very useful to the British. Governor Drake in his Narrative, dated 19th July, 1756, wrote :

"On or about the 16th of March [1756] a letter arrived from Mr. William Watts, Chief at Cossimbazar, addressed to the President and Mr. Manningham, certifiying an application having been made to him from Rajabullub requesting we would admit his, Rajabullub's, family into Calcutta for the space of two months until Kissendass his wife was brought to bed and able to proceed on her journey (this Kissendass was son to Rajabullub) and strenuously recommended we would not refuse that request as Rajabullub was likely to hold great posts in the government and might from such favor shewn his family be very instrumental in giving an uninterrupted currency to our business at Dacca and its dependencies. . . . ." †

Krishnadas was accommodated in the house of Amir Chand, a Panjabi merchant, represented by truthful Christian historians as Omy Chand, the 'crafty Bengalee.' He is the same man to deceive whom the 'heaven-born General' Robert Clive did not scruple to commit forgery.

The demand of the Nawab for the surrender of Krishnadas and his wealth was peremptorily refused by the English at Calcutta. Shiraj-ud-daula, with that forbearance which is quite oriental, submitted to all the insults which the English had heaped on him. He was desirous of settling the differences between him and the English amicably and with that object in view, he sent for Mr. Watts, the Chief of the English factory at Kasimbazar. It is on record that

"Sometime before Kasimbazar was attacked, Mr. Watts acquainted the Governor and Counciil, that he was told from the Durbar, by order of the Nawab, that he had great reason to be dissatisfied with the conduct of the late English in general. Besides he had heard they were building new fortifications near Calcutta without ever applying to him or consulting him about it, which he by no means approved of; for he looked upon us only as a set of merchants, and therefore if we chose to reside in his dominions under that denomination, we were extremely welcome, but as prince of the country he forthwith insisted on the demolition of all those new buildings we had made."§

If we are to believe Orme,

"Mr. Watts had neglected to inform the presidency of the complaints which Shiraj-ud-daula had made."**

* *Ibid.* Vol. III, p. 164.
† *Ibid,* Vol. I, p. 120.
§ Hastings MSS. in the British Museum, Vol. 29, p. 209.
** *Ibid.* Vol. II, p. 55.

Whether Mr. Watts informed the presidency or not, it is quite evident that the presidency were well acquainted with the complaints and demands of the Nawab. But bent as the English were upon mischief, they treated all the representations of the Nawab with great contempt. There was no other alternative left to Shiraj-ud-daula than to have recourse to such means as would extirpate them from his dominions. In a letter dated 1st June, 1756, to that Armenian, Coja Wajid, he wrote :

"I have three substantial motives for extirpating the English out of my country : one that they have built strong fortifications and dug a large ditch in the King's dominions contrary to the established laws of the country ; the second is that they have abused the privilege of *dustucks* by granting them to such as were no ways entitled to them, from which practices the King has suffered greatly in the revenue of his Customs. The third motive is that they give protection to such of the King's subjects as have by their behaviour in the employs they were entrusted with made themselves liable to be called to an account and instead of giving them [up] on demand they allow such persons to shelter themselves within their bounds from the hands of justice. For these reasons it is become requisite to drive them out."*

The verdict of history is that the Nawab had legitimate grounds of action against the English, with whose perfidious conduct he had become thoroughly disgusted. Even an English writer, S. C. Hill, after reviewing all the circumstances which preceded the hostilities, has to admit.

"It will be seen, therefore, that Siraj-ud-daula had a show of reason in all the pretexts he alleged for his attack on the British."†

COMMENCEMENT OF HOSTILITIES

Insulted and treated with contempt by the English shop-keepers trading in his dominions, Shiraj-ud-daula determined to extirpate them from Bengal. With that object in view, the first thing he did was to send his troops on 24th May to invest the factory of the English at Kasimbazar. It seems that the Kasimbazar factory was not so well-fortified as to be capable of a prolonged defence, and so without fighting, Mr. Watts had to surrender himself to the Nawab's army. This was a great blow to the prestige of the English ; but the humane Shiraj-ud-daula did not treat them as rebels, which they in reality were, and did not make short work of them by executing them. Had he done so, he would not have been betrayed by those traders whom he dealt with leniently. For they did not possess any sense of gratitude and did not and could not appreciate the kind treatment they had received at Shiraj-ud-daula's hand. Thus M. Jean Law, speaking of Mr. Watts in his Memoir, wrote :

"If he was the dupe of Siraj-ud-daula's bad faith, it must be acknowledged that he knew how to take his revenge."§

S. C. Hill writes :

"Mr. Watts was no simpleton, and it was as much by his *diplomacy* at Murshidabad as by the victory of Clive at Plassey that Siraj-ud-daula was driven from his throne."**

* Loc. cit., Vol. I, p. 4.
† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. LV.
§ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 167.
** *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. LXII.

The word diplomacy in the above extract should be considered as synonymous with treachery.

Holwell blamed Watts for surrendering the factory at Kasimbazar. In his letter dated Fulta, 30th November, 1756, to the Court of Directors, he wrote:

"I will not subscribe to the opinion of our five Captains,......and say their force was sufficient to resist and defend the place for any long time against the *Suba's* army; but had it been defended at all, he could not have attacked and taken it, without the loss of time and many of his people, and probably some of his principal officers. A stroke of this kind might have had happy consequences to your affairs; it might have inclined the *Suba* to an accommodation by cooling still more the zeal of his Ministers, generals, officers and people,......A defence of only 24 hours would, in its consequences, have retarded in all probability his march to Calcutta for many days,......"*

But in the opinion of other competent judges, the factory at Kasimbazar was not strong enough to resist the assaults of Shiraj-ud-daula's army.

Fortune seemed to smile on Shiraj's expedition. Without his firing a shot, Kasimbazar factory fell into his hands, and on the 5th June, he began his march on Calcutta. Had he been detained for even a few days at Kasimbazar, it would have been impossible for him to proceed towards Calcutta. Holwell, in the letter from which an extract has already been given above, wrote:

"A detention of his army before Cossimbuzar for two or three days, would have brought on dirty rainy weather in his march towards us, and incommoded him greatly as well in the passage of his troops and cannon, as in the attack of our Settlement; whereas, by the easy possession he acquired of Cossimbuzar, he was enabled to march against us without loss of time or obstruction from the weather, which afforded not a drop of rain during his march and attack of Calcutta, but on the 21st, at night, whilst I was prisoner in the camp, it rained heavily, and dirty weather succeeded for many days after, during which his musketry, being all match-locks, would have been rendered in a manner useless."†

Shiraj-ud-daula's march on Calcutta excites our admiration and shows what a capable general he would have made, had he been served by trustworthy officers on whom he could rely. S. C. Hill writes:

"In the hottest season of the year, in a country with no roads and with a cumbrous train of artillery drawn by elephants and oxen, his army covered a distance of about 160 miles in eleven days."§

This should be looked upon as a record march, taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration.

On his march on Calcutta, Shiraj-ud-daula had to wrest the Fort of Tannah from the English. His troops fought gallantly and inflicted a crushing defeat on the English. Wrote the historian Orme:

" Whilst the Nawab was advancing, it was determined to take possession of the Fort of Tannah,** which lay about 5 miles below Calcutta, on the opposite shore, and commanded the narrowest part of the river between Hughly and the Sea, with 13 pieces of cannon. Two ships of 300 tons, and two brigantines, anchored before it early in the morning of the 13th June: and as soon as they

* *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 12.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 12-13.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. LXIII.

** According to Rev. Long, the Fort of Tannah occupied the grounds which now constitute the Royal Botanical Gardens, Shibpur.

began to fire, the Moorish garrison, which did not exceed 50 men, fled ; on which some Europeans and Laskars landed ; and having disabled part of the cannon, flung the rest into the river. But the next day they were attacked by a detachment of 2,000 men, sent from Hugley, who stormed the fort, drove them to their boats, and then began to fire, with their matchlocks and two small fieldpieces, on the vessels, which endeavoured in vain with their cannon and musketry to dislodge them. The next day a reinforcement of 80 soldiers were sent from Calcutta, but the cannonade having made no impression, they and the vessels returned to the town." (Orme, Vol. II, pp. 59-60).

It is not necessary to describe in great detail the fighting that took place for the capture of Calcutta. The Nawab thought that the Christians of the French and Dutch nationalities who were trading in his dominions would assist him in his chastisement of the British. Had there been any far-seeing statesmen among those nations, they would have most willingly rendered all the help that lay in their power to the Nawab, for by so doing they could have driven away their most formidable rivals from the richest part of India. But unfortunately for them, they did not do so, and as a result of this, it was they who were driven out of India.

We cannot sufficiently praise Shiraj-ud-daula for his love of peace. After having captured Kasimbazar, he thought that the English would still come to terms. The Chief of the Kasimbazar factory, Mr. Watts, was his prisoner. In the course of a letter which he, together with another of his co-prisoners named Mr. Collet, wrote from Chandernagore, dated 17th July, 1756, to the Court of Directors, the following passage occurs :—

"We are persuaded this dismal catastrophe of Your Honours' estate in Bengal being plundered, your Settlements lost, your servants destroyed and ruined with some hundred thousands of Calcutta inhabitants might have been prevented had the Governor and Council thought proper to have compromised matters for a sum of money. And as a proof, the Nabob touched nothing at Cossimbuzar but the warlike stores or at any of the other factorys or *aurungs* till he had taken Calcutta. Roydulub, the Nabob's *duan* and who commanded the van of the army, likewise frequently sent for the Chief, while he was prisoner in the camp, and told him smiling that we must pay a *crore* of rupees, and when the Chief assured him the Company's whole estate did not amount to that sum he then asked him if they would pay 20 *lacks* of rupees, to which the Chief answered again that the Company's annual trade to Bengal was not more than the demand he made. The *duan* then desired to know what they could afford to pay, to which he replyed he had no powers to treat, but if the *duan* would permit him to write to Calcutta he should then be able to inform him. This request the *duan* absolutely refused, but told him if any proposals of accommodation were made first from Calcutta he might then write as often as he pleased. We being surrounded and strictly watched night and day by the Nabob's people, we had no opportunity of writing to Calcutta till we were opposite to Hughly, where we got permission to write to the Dutch Director for some provisions to whom we sent a letter to be forwarded to Calcutta, wherein we wrote that if the Governor and Council would send a proper person to the camp or empower us to act, we flattered ourselves that even then the dispute with the Nabob might be finished for a sum of money."*

But the British authorities at Calcutta were resolved not to come to any agreement with the Nawab.† Shiraj-ud-daula was moderate in his demands and desirous of living on terms of peace with all his neighbours. But he was not acquainted with the character of the foreign traders who wanted to cross swords with him.

* Hill, Vol. I, p. 103.

† *Ibid.*, p. 104.

But the English knew that they were not strong enough to meet the Nawab's army in the open field and in fair fight. So they tried their best to raise traitors and encourage desertions in the Nawab's camp. Governor Drake in his Narrative, dated 19th July, 1756, wrote:

"It was essayed to draw from the Nabob's army the several Europeans and Portugueze by application in writing from the priests who by three letters represented to them how contrary it was to Christianity their taking arms in the service of the Moors against Christians, with threats from those priests unless they quitted the evil way they were in and came to our assistance where they would be received into pay. These letters were sent to the Nabob's camp to be delivered the first Christian could be met with. On receipt thereof they declared there was no means left for them to escape, that had they been before advised of the offence they were committing they could possibly have fouud an opportunity of coming over to us."*

Indian princes always came to grief by their keeping in their pay Christian adventurers of different nationalities who never possessed any sense of honor and gratitude and were ready to betray their masters, whose salt they had eaten, for the sake of filthy lucre. What would have happened if the Indian princes had imitated the Christian English and adopted their tactics and tried to raise traitors and encourage desertions in the ranks of the Sepoys in the service of the Company by instructing Hindu priests and Moslem mullas to remonstrate with them on the wickedness of fighting under the flag of any Christian nation against Indians, whether Hindus or Musalmans? The Christian supremacy could not then have been established in India.

Although the English traders were averse to coming to any agreement with the Nawab, yet, as said above, they knew that they would not be able to stand against the troops of Shiraj-ud-daula in open and fair fight. Their chief deficiencies were the want of guns and powder. No one has ever given credit to the English traders for not being selfish. With them selfish motives overpowered all other considerations. So on the receipt of the intelligence of the Nawab's intended attack on Calcutta, it was decided not to defend the native town. Writes Governor Drake in the Narrative which has been referred to above:

"The black merchants and inhabitants were greatly terrified at the near approach of Siraj-ud-daula's army, sending their women and effects to different parts of the country. They had before been sent for and ordered to erect *futtocks* in different streets of the Black Town,......"†

The merchants and inhabitants of the native town of Calcutta did not consider it worth their while to carry out the orders of the Christian authorities, knowing fully well that they would not receive any protection at the hands of the latter. To raise *futtacks* or to obstruct the roads and passages would not have prevented the entrance of Shiraj's army into Calcutta. So with the exception of one Govind Ram Mitter, who, according to Governor Drake's account,

"employed several hands at his part of the town by Baag Bazar in felling down trees and cutting through the roads to break the enemy's passage, stopped up the small avenues leading into our town, and destroyed many houses where the enemy might have obtained shelter."§

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 140-141.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 139.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

no one else did what the English desired them to do. They did not do it because they saw the heartless selfishness of the English, who, instead of giving them protection, burnt many of their houses. Governor Drake wrote :—

"Frequent alarms of the near approach of the enemy made us resolve to make as clear a passage as we could to oppose the attack, for which purpose we set fire to all the straw houses within our Lines, which fire spread itself to a much greater distance."*

No wonder that the coolies, lascars and servants deserted the English. But while no protection was given to the non-Christian natives of Calcutta, every facility was afforded to the Christian Armenians and Portuguese to fill with their women, children and slaves the houses adjacent to the factory.

The Nawab reached Calcutta on the 16th June. There were some skirmishes on that and the following day, but the great attack was reserved by the Nawab for the 18th, which, being Friday, is held to be a lucky day in the Muhammadan calendar ; and besides the 18th June, 1756, corresponded to the 19th Ramazan, one of the fortunate days of that great Muhammadan fast. On the day, in anticipation of the fighting, the English authorities at Calcutta issued the brutal and inhuman order that no quarter was to be given to the enemy.†

But the fact of refusing to give quarter to the enemy dwindles into insignificance when compared with the other enormities which the English had been perpetrating at Calcutta. Amir Chand, the "crafty" Omychand of European writers, was of great help to the English. Without him they could not have built up their colossal trade in Bengal. But for his services rendered to the English, he received nothing but insults and injuries at their hands. When Calcutta was to be attacked, with their guilty conscience they imagined that Amir Chand might turn against them and render aid to Shiraj-ud-daula. So they considered it expedient to make him a prisoner. When the soldiers were sent to his house, he surrendered himself without resistance. But they were not satisfied with making him alone a prisoner. His brother-in-law Hazari Mal, and his guest Krishna Das, son of Raj Ballabh, were also to be made prisoners by them. These two men did not surrender so easily as Amir Chand had done. They ordered their servants to fire upon the soldiers. Hazari Mal fought bravely and was not captured till he had lost his left hand.

Krishna Das was under the protection of the English, and it is revolting to the feeling of every Oriental when he sees a guest ill-treated or betrayed by his host. This is against the code of ethics and honor of every Oriental nation. So they were quite disgusted with the conduct of the English.

But their blood must have boiled with indignation when they saw the English sending their soldiers to the apartments of the women of the household of Amir Chand. The object of these soldiers can be very easily imagined. It was more than what the flesh and blood of the faithful Jamadar of Amir Chand could bear. At that critical moment, what he did would have exacted the admiration of all the thoughtful world, had it found a historian like Thucydides or Gibbon to record the deed. Writes Orme :

Ibid., p. 144.
Ibid. p. 258.

"The head of the peons, who was an Indian of a high caste, set fire to the house, and, in order to save the women of the family from the dishonor of being exposed to strangers, entered their apartments, and killed, it is said, thirteen of them with his own hand, after which, he stabbed himself, but contrary to his intention, not mortally." (Vol. II, p. 60)

But notwithstanding all their precautions and excesses, committed on those who were under their protection and therefore quite helpless to defend themselves, the English were miserably beaten. The European gunners in the service of the Nawab were not true to their salt; nay, they were treacherous. Even S. C. Hill is forced to write that

"The enemy's big guns were perhaps purposely too badly served by the French and Portuguese gunners to produce any great effect,....."*

But the Nawab's non-Christian soldiers served him very faithfully. In a letter from the East Indies, dated 15th December, 1756, which appeared in *Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1757, it was stated that

"All the mischief proceeded from the Counsellor's houses being built close round the Fort. In these houses the enemy lodged themselves, and galled the English greatly."†

It was impossible for the English to stand upon the ramparts of the Fort and effectively reply to the enemy's fire. So notwithstanding the treachery of the European gunners in the service of Shiraj-ud-daula, the English could not make any impression on the Moslem prince's troops. On the contrary, they were very ignominiously beaten. All their efforts were in vain. Writes one of the historians of their race and creed :

"In such circumstances, the expediency of abandoning the fort and retreating on ship-board naturally occurred to the besieged, and such a retreat might have been made without dishonour. But the want of concert, together with the criminal eagerness manifested by some of the principal servants of the Company to provide for their own safety at any sacrifice, made the closing scene of the siege one of the most disgraceful in which Englishmen have ever been engaged."§ (Thornton's History of the British Empire, Vol. I, p. 190).

The truth is that the English, who were naturally cowards, were thoroughy demoralized by the exhibition of superior military tactics by Shiraj-ud-daula. Hill writes "that the men were no longer under control, many of the militia were drunk, and some had even drawn their bayonets on the officers who called them to their duty."**

How demoralized the foreigners in the Fort had become is clear from the evidence of one Mr. John Cooke :

"From the time that we were confined to the defence of the fort itself, nothing was to be seen but disorder, riots and confusion. Everybody was officious in advising, but no one was properly qualified to give advice."

If the besieged foreigners were not totally annihilated, it was due to the generosity and chivalry of the besiegers. Thus proceeded Mr. Cooke in his evidence, from which the extract has been made above :

"The factory was so crowded with Portuguese women and unnecessary people that it would have

* Loc. Cit., Vol. I, p. LXXXVII.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 73.

§ *Loc. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. LXXX.

* *Ibid.*. Vol. III, p. 296.

been impossible to have found provisions enough for one week, even had our walls and garrison been able to resist the efforts of the enemy. In this situation it was lucky for us the Moors (who never fight in the night) suspended their operations as soon as it was dark, and gave us, by that means, an opportunity of consulting and debating on what was to be done."

Now an attempt was made by the English to negotiate with the Nawab.

"Mr. Holwell now begged Omichand, who had been all the time a prisoner, to go to the Nawab and ask for terms ; but, enraged at the treatment he had recieved, or else perfectly certain that the Nawab was implacable, he refused to give any assistance, and was left to nurse his wrath in prison."*

So there was nothing left for the Christians but flight and retreat. There were ships ready to take them off and they effected their retreat in great disgrace. It was

"a retreat which, from the circumstances attending it, seemed certain to be disastrous, for on the fleet there was no order and no discipline. The half-caste women were so little sensible of their danger that it was with the utmost difficulty that they could be persuaded to go below decks when the ships were under fire whilst passing Tanna Fort, and a French account asserts that had the natives had a few gunners who knew their business not a ship would have escaped. Whilst passing down they met a French ship, *Le Silhouet,* and forced the commander to give them some provisions. So desperate was their condition that the French wrote to their captains to be on their guard lest the British should resort to violence in order to obtain supplies, and so possibly involve them in trouble with the Nawab."†

THE CAPTURE OF CALCUTTA

The humiliation of the Company's servants was complete. They had deliberately insulted and treated Shiraj-ud-daula with contempt. And now they had to rue their conduct. Shiraj after capture of the fort at Kasimbazar, is reported to have exclaimed :

"Look now at those Englishmen, who were once so proud that they did not wish to receive me in their houses."§

He could have repeated the same words with greater emphasis after the capture of Calcutta.

Bengal was called by Muhammadan writers the "Paradise of India." Wrote M. Jean Law in his Memoir :

"In all the official papers, *firmans, parwanas* of the Mogal Empire, where there is question of Bengal, it is never named without adding these words, "Paradise of India," an epithet given to it *par excellence.* The country supplies all its own wants by its fruitfulness and the variety of its production, of the other parts of the Empire all stand in need."

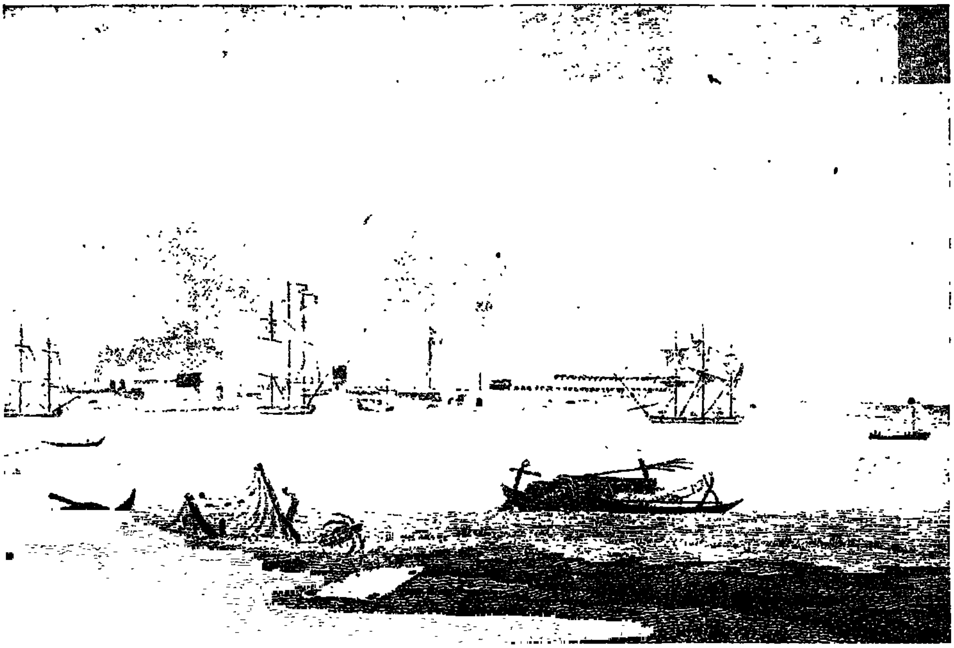
So the English must have felt very keenly the humiliation of the loss of Calcutta. This is evident from the letter of Holwell to the Court of Directors, dated 30th November, 1756, who referred to the expulsion of the English from Calcutta, in the words,

" as fatal and melancholy a catastrophe as ever the annals of any people, or colony of people, suffered since the days of Adam."

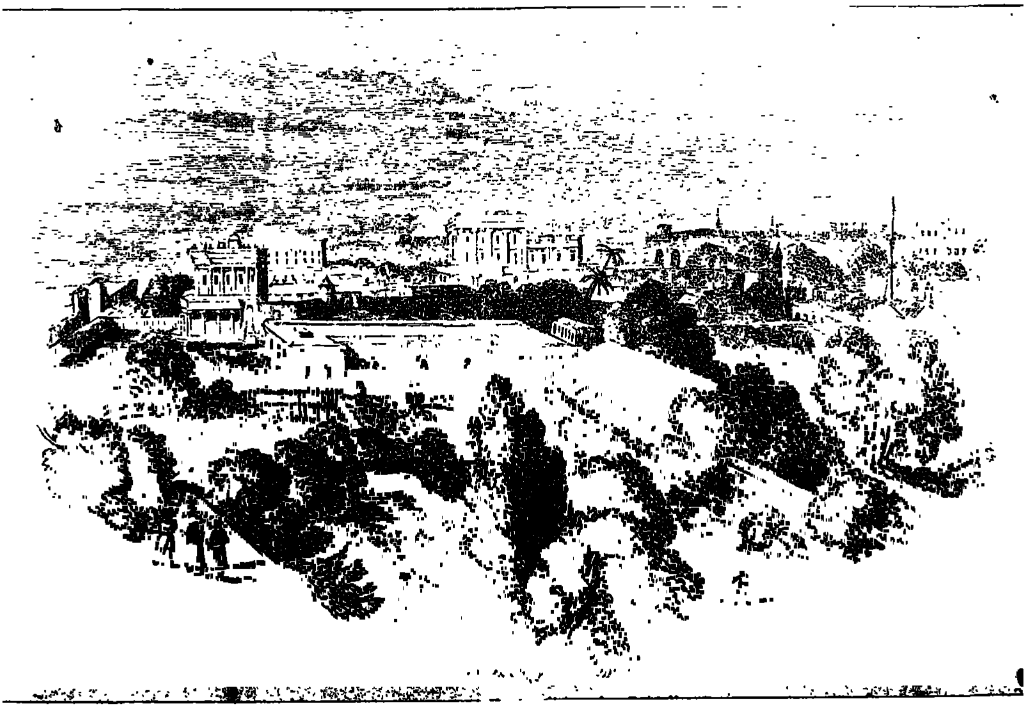
* *Ibid,* Vol. I. p. LXXXI.

† *Ibid.,* Vol. I.p.LXXV.

§ *Ibid.,* Vol. III. p. 16?-163.



Old Fort William, Calcutta



View of Old Calcutta

The British were expelled from "the Paradise," but like their first ancestor, not for ever. Unfortunately, Shiraj was not thoroughly acquainted with their character. Had he been so, he would have exterminated them. They would have been treated as rebels, which, in fact, they were. Instead of being made prisoners, they would have been executed. When the Nawab and his army came to attack Calcutta it is on record that,

"Orders were issued out that no quarter was to be given to the enemy." *

So no blame could have attached to Shiraj-ud-daula had he executed the English who fell into his hands at the capture of Calcutta. But Shiraj was an oriental, and belonged to that part of the world which produced Buddha, Christ and Mahomed. With his mother's milk he had imbibed lessons of forgiveness. And hence in the hour of his triumph, he showed that magnanimity and generosity of conduct which one would look for in vain in an occidental similarity situated.

Some writers of Indian history who credited Shiraj with everything that is bad in human nature gave it as their opinion that the moderation of the Nawab was due to the intercession of the Nawab's grand-mother, the widow of Ali Vardi, probably also to his mother, Amina Begam, for the prisoners. † S. C. Hill says that

"The interest of these ladies in the English merchants may have been partly due to the fact that they also were accustomed to speculate in commerce." §

If this is true, Bengal was lost to the Nawab and his life sacrificed, because some of the ladies of his household made paltry profits by speculating in commerce, the principal article of which in those days was saltpetre. Perhaps these Muhammadan ladies were ignorant of the advice given by the Sultan of Turkey to Aurangzib and on which the latter acted.

"The religious zeal of Aurangzeb seems to have reached the ears of the Sultan of Turkey. Both were Sunnis. The Sultan wrote to Aurangzeb begging him to forbid his subjects from selling saltpetre to Christians, as it was often burnt for the destruction of good Muhammadans. Aurangzeb issued the necessary prohibition, and the English lost for a while their saltpetre trade at Patna." **

The Nawabs of Bengal, too, were perhaps ignorant of the above advice.

If Shiraj-ud-daula did not exterminate the English, it was because he entertained great contempt for them. For this also he had to pay dearly with his life. It is a Persian proverb whieh says, never consider an enemy contemptible.

English historians have associated the capture of Calcutta with a horrible tragedy, designated by them as "The Black Hole ." Whether such a tragedy occurred is more than doubtful, and even if it did, we, for our part, fail to see how Shiraj could have been held responsible for it or any blame could have been attached to him.

On Sunday, the 20th of June, 1756, when the Nawab's soldiers assaulted and entered the fort, the besieged foreigners were not ill-used by them . According to the narrative of Governor Drake, dated 19th July, 1756, Shiraj also entered the fort and

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 258.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. XCII.

§ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

** Talboys Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, p. 162.

"held a kind of *Durbar* there to receive the compliments of his officers, ... The prisoners were brought before him and implored his mercy, when he was carried to another place where Mr. Holwell was conducted to him with his hands bound ...... Thus was loss of our Settlement completed and Calcutta destroyed. *

Writes Hill :

"The native soldiers had plundered the Europeans of their valuables, but did not ill-treat them, and the Muhammadan priests were occupied in singing a song of thanksgiving. Suddenly the scene changed. Some European soldiers had made themselves drunk and assaulted the natives. The latter complained to the Nawab, who asked where the Europeans were accustomed to confine soldiers who had misbehaved in any way. He was told, in the Black Hole, and, as some of his officers suggested it would be dangerous to leave so many prisoners at large during the night, ordered that they should all be confined in it. The native officers, who were enraged at the great losses inflicted on them by the defenders, for it is said 7,000 perished in the siege, applied this order to all the prisoners without distinction, and to the number of 146 they were crowded into a little chamber intended to hold only one or two private soldiers, only about 18 feet square, and this upon one of the hottest nights of the year. The dreadful sufferings that followed, the madness which drove the prisoners to trample each other down and to fight for the water which only added to their torture, the insults they poured upon their jailors in order to induce them to fire on them and so end their misery, and the brutal delight of the native soldiers at a sight which they looked upon as a *tamasha,* are all told in Mr. Holwell's narrative, than which nothing more pathetic is to be found in the annals of the British in India. From 7 o'clock in the evening to 6 o'clock in the morning this agony lasted, for even the native officers who pitied them dared not disturb the Nabob before he awoke from his slumbers, when only twenty-three out of one hundred and forty-six who went in came out alive, the ghastlyest forms that were ever seen alive, from this infernal scene of horror."†

Such is the account given by English writers of what they designate as the Black Hole Tragedy. It is a pity that the above-mentioned writer has not tried to refute the arguments advanced by the author of *Shiraj-ud-daula,* a work in Bengali by Akshay Kumar Maitra, in which an attempt has been made to prove that the Black Hole Tragedy is a myth.

Dr. Bhola Nath Chunder, the talented author of the *Travels of a Hindoo,* wrote in the *Calcutta University Magazine* for 1895 :

"As to the Black-Hole tragedy...,......I have a very doubtful faith in its account. Holwell, one of the fellow-sufferers, was the first to publish it to the world. But I have always questioned it to myself, how could 146 beings be squeezed into a room 18 feet square even if it were possible to closely pack them like the seeds within a pomegranate, or like the bags in a ship's hold, made into one mass by packets shoved in here and there into the interstices ? Geometry contradicting arithmetic gives the lie to the story. It is little better than a bogey against which was raised an uproar of pity."

Now, the exact measurement of the Black Hole is uncertain. Captain Grant in his account of the loss of Calcutta, dated Fulta, 13th July, 1756, wrote :

"And as such as were unhappy as to be taken prisoners were at night put into the Black Hole a place about 16 foot square, to the number of near 200 Europeans, Portuguese and Armenians,

* Ibid., vol. 1, p . 160.

† *Ibid.* Vol 1, p. XC.

of which many were wounded. They were so crowded one upon another in this narrow confinement that by the heat and suffocation not above ten of the number survived till morning."*

Captain Grant's account materially differs from the version received among English writers as to the size of the Black Hole, the number of men incarcerated in it and of the survivors.

According to Dr. C. R. Wilson,

"The area of the Black Hole is 18 ft. by 14 ft 10 in. This allows just 267 sq. ft. of area for 146 persons, or less than 2 sq. ft. each."†

But Dr. Wilson never troubled himself to inquire how he was to place 146 persons in a room the area of which was not more than 267 square feet. On an average, it is necessary to allow a man, whether sitting or standing, not less three square feet of space. According to that calculation not more than 89 persons could have been accommodated in the Black Hole.

This is on the assumption that such a tragedy as that of the Black Hole ever occurred. But there are strong reasons to suspect the reality of its occurrence. There is no mention of the incident in Mussalman chronicles of the time, e. g., Syed Golam Husain's *Seir-Mutakhatin*, or in the Proceedings Book of the English who had taken refuge at Fulta, or in the reports of the debates of the Madras Council. There is no mention of it in the letters of Clive and Watson to the Nawab, or in the treaty of Alinagar. Clive in his letter to the Court of Directors, explaining the reasons why Shiraj-ud-daula was dethroned, does not even refer to the Black Hole incident. The treaty or rather the conspiracy that was entered into by the English with Mi Jafar, stipulates for damages of every kind, but no compensation for the surviving relatives of those alleged to have died in the Black Hole finds a place in it. There is no mention of the incident in the Note read by Holwell before the Select Committee on the 4th August, 1760.

Clive was sent to Bengal on the recommendation of his friend Robert Orme, the historian, by whom he was charged to punish those who took part in the perpetration of the tragedy. That Clive did nothing of the sort is perhaps a very strong proof of the non-occurrence of the incident.

It should also be borne in mind that Holwell never possessed any great reputation for scrupulous regard for truth. His co-religionists and compatriots considered him as a teller of specious fibs. Thus almost all his contemporaries looked upon his story of the dying advice of Ali Vardy Khan to Shiraj as a "specious fable".

John Zephaniah Holwell was born in Dublin in 1711. He chose medicine as his profession and came out to Calcutta as Surgeon's mate to an Indiaman in 1732. After practising his profession for some years, he became Zamindar of Calcutta, a post carrying with it the duties of Collector and of Judge. He was also appointed a member of the Council. When Shiraj-ud-daula attacked Calcutta, he was made a prisoner, but subsequently released, and after joining his countrymen at Fulta, he pro-

* *Old Fort William in Bengal*, by Dr. C. R. Wilson Vol. II, p. 59.

† *Ibid.*, Vol II, p. 245

ceeded home with despatches on board the sloop *Syren.* It was during this voyage that he wrote his 32-page letter to William Davis, Esq., dated the 28th day of February, 1757, containing the narrative of the Black Hole. When he returned from his native land to Bengal, Shiraj-ud-daula had been assassinated and Mir Jafar had been elevated to the throne of Bengal by the treachery and fraud of the English. How the assassination of Shiraj and accession of Mir Jafar benefited the English will be mentioned further on. But it will suffice here to say that Holwell was not forgotten by Mir Jafar, who paid him one *lakh* of Rupees. But Holwell was not grateful to him. The ungrateful conduct of Holwell is simply outrageous. To depose Mir Jafar and to get Mir Kasim elevated in his stead, from whom, according to the report of the Committee of the House of Commons, 1772, he received more than three lakhs of Rupees, he did not scruple to circulate lies and blacken the character of his benefactor.

Appendix 9 to the first report on the nature, state and condition of the East India Company published in 1772 shows to what depth of degradation Holwell stooped in order to get Mir Jafar deposed from the Masnad of Bengal. In a memorial penned by him setting forth the causes of the late change in the subahship of Bengal, it was stated:

"The Nawab Jaffar Allee Cawn, was of a temper extremely tyrannical and avaricious, at the same time very indolent; ....numberless are the instances of men, of all degrees, whose blood he has spilt without the least assigned reason. To learn the names and circumstances of all these sufferers, would be a work of time; but some of the most striking examples are the following:—

"..........*Gasseta Begum,* Widow of the Nabob *Shehamat Jung*;

" *Omna Begum,* Mother of the Nabob *Serajah-Dowla*;

"*Muzado Dowla,* son of *Padsha Coolly Cawn,* adopted by *Shehamut Jung*;

" *Lutfen Nissa Begum,* Widow of the Nabob *Serajah-Dowla*;

Her infant, Daughter of *Serajah-Dowla.* *

"The five unhappy sufferers,......perished all in one Night at *Dacca,* about the month of *June* 1760; where they had been detained prisoners since the Accession of *Jaffer Allee Cawn* to the subahship; a Parwannah was sent to *Jassaret Cawn,* the Naib of *Dacca,* to put to death all the Survivors of the Nabobs, *Aliverdee Cawn, Shehamut Jang,* and *Serajah-Dowlah*; but upon his declining to obey so cruel an order, the messenger, who had private instructions to execute this tragedy, in case of the other's refusal, took them from the place of their confinement; and having carried them out at midnight upon the river, massacred and drowned them, with about 20 women of inferior note, and attendants."

The above was a tissue of gross falsehoods. In the supplement to the letter addressed to the Hon'ble Court of Directors for affairs of the Hon'ble United Company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies by Clive and others from Fort William, the 30 September, 1766, it is stated:

"26. In jnstice to the memory of the late Nabob *Meer Jaffier,* we think it incumbent on us to acquaint you that the horrible massacres wherewith he is charged by Mr. *Hollwell,* in his 'Address to the Proprietors of *East India* Stock' (p. 46), are cruel aspersions on the character of that Prince, *which have not the least foundation in truth.* The several persons there affirmed, and who were generally thought to have been murdered by his order, are all now living, except two,. . . . ." †

* See the life-sketches (based on contemporary reccords) of Ghasiti (Begam of Motijhil), Amina, and Luft-un-nisa Begams, as contributed by Brajendranath Banerji to the *Bengal: Past & Present,* Serial Nos. 62, 64, & 67.

† Long's *Selections from unpublished Records of Government,* i. 428.

J. Z. Holwell

If Holwell did not scruple to vilify the character of his benefactor Mir Jafar, by propagating barefaced lies, what wonder he should have invented the story of the Black Hole Tragedy in order to calumniate Shiraj-ud-daula, from whom he received some injuries at least ?

The well-known English philosopher and thinker, Herbert Spencer, mentioned the following instance of the utter disregard of truth exhibited by the Christian nations of the West in the beginning of the present century. Referring to the pretext which the Christian nations considered as justifying their invasion of China, Herbert Spencer wrote :

"There came first the sensational accounts of a massacre at Pekin, describing in detail the stubborn resistance of the Europeans, the desperate hand-to-hand encounters, the final overwhelming of the small band, followed by particulars of Chinese atrocities ; and then there came in a few days proof that this circumstantial account was utterly baseless—there had been no massacre, no atrocities." *

If in these days of railways, steamers and telegraphs, Europeans do not blush to spread lies, half, if not fully, conscious all the time that such lies would be after all detected, it is small wonder that in those days when there was no facility of communication, they propagated falsehoods knowing that these would not be easily detected, nay, on the contrary, these would go down to posterity as gospel truths.

But even assuming for the sake of argument that such a tragedy as that of the Black Hole occurred, we do not see how Shiraj could be blamed for it. Certainly he had not built the dungeon. The historian Mill writes :

"The Subahdar, (Siraj-ud-daula), though humanity was no part of his character, appears not on the present occasion to have intended cruelty ; for when Mr. Holwell was carried into his presence with his hands tied, he ordered them to be set loose, and assured him, upon the faith of a soldier, that of the heads of him and his companions, not a hair should be touched. When evening, however, came, it was a question with the guards to whom they were intrusted, how they might be secured for the night. Some search was made for a convenient apartment ; but none was found ; upon which information was obtained of a place which the English themselves had employed as a prison. Into this, without further inquiry, they were impelled. It was unhappily a small, ill-aired, and unwholesome dungeon, called the Black Hole, and the English had their own practice to thank for suggesting it to the officers of the Subahdar as a fit place of confinement."†

H. Beveridge, in his paper on "Old places in Murshidabad", contributed to the *Calcutta Review* for April, 1892, p. 345, says :

"Perhaps we ought not to say very much about the Black Hole, or regard it as a detestable instance of malignity on the part of Siraj-ud-daula, seeing that a similar misadventure occurred in the Amritsar District on 1st August, 1857. Mr. Cooper tells us how a great number of captured sepoys were shut up in a large, round tower, or, bastion, and how, after 237 of them had been taken out and shot, it was reported that the remainder would not come out. 'The doors were opened, and behold ! they were nearly all dead. Unconsciously the tragedy of Holwell's Black Hole had been re-enacted............forty-five bodies—dead from fright, exhaustion, fatigue, heat and partial suffocation —were dragged into light.' (*The Crisis in the Punjab,* p.162)."

* *Facts and Comments.*

† Vol. III (fifth edition), p. 117.

S. C. Hill writes :

"Probably the reference to the Black Hole is an amplification, for in the careless talk of Calcutta the Black Hole and Fort William seem to have been often confounded,"*

If the above be true, then it affords a clue to the story of the Black Hole Tragedy. It means that the men who were unable to escape to the ships on the river were consequently made and kept prisoners in Fort William. But even the most careful search has failed to find the names of the 123 alleged to have perished in the Black Hole. Hill says :

"In the Black Hole 123 perished, of whom we can trace the names of only 56 ; . . . ." †

The question naturally arises, why cannot the names of the remaining 67 be traced ? Perhaps there were not so many as 123 Christian persons in the Fort when it was captured by Shiraj-ud-daula.

All that we have said above induces us to believe that the Black Hole tragedy was a myth invented by the interested Europeans to serve their ulterior ends. If 56 persons died, they did not die of suffocation in the Black Hole, but of their sickness and wounds in the Fort ; for only such persons were left behind as were unable to make their escape to the ships on the river.§

THE NAWAB'S RETURN TO HIS CAPITAL

Shiraj-ud-daula, after wresting Calcutta from the hands of the English, appointed Raja Manick Chand as its governor and changed its name to Alinagar. As said before, Shiraj entertained a very mean and contemptible opinion of the English and therefore did not extirpate them. Scrafton in his Reflections, pp. 58, says :

"It may appear a matter of wonder why the *Soubah* permitted us to remain so quietly at Fulta till we were become formidable to him, which I can only account for from his mean opinion of us,..... and had no idea of our attempting to return by force."

The Chief of the French factory at Kashimbazar, M. Jean Law, says :

"Siraj-ud-daula had the most extravagant contempt for Europeans ; a pair of slippers, said he, is all that is needed to govern them. Their number, according to him, could not in all Europe come up to more than ten or twelve thousand men. What fear, then, could he have of the English nation, which could not present to his mind more than a quarter of the whole ? He was, therefore, very far from thinking that the English could entertain the idea of re-establishing themselves by force. To humiliate themselves—to offer money with one hand, and receive joyously with the other his permission to re-establish themselves—was the whole project which he could naturally suppose

* *Bengal in 1756-1757*, Vol. I, p. XCVI.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. XCIV.

§ With conspicuous ability Mr. J. H. Little was able to prove in his article "The Black Hole—the question of Holwell's veracity" that the Black Hole incident was a Gigantic Hoax of Holwell (see *Bengal Past and Present*, July-Sep. 1915, Serial No. 21, pp. 75-104). After the publication of this paper a special meeting of the Calcutta Historical Society was held on the 24th March, 1916, at 9 P. M. in the hall of the Asiatic Society of Bengal to have a discussion on the Black Hole Question, the Venerable Archdeacon W. K. Firminger, M.A., B. D., presiding. I would specially refer the reader to the speeches delivered on the occasion by Mr. Little and Mr. Akshay Kumar Maitra, *Bengal Past and Present*, Jany.—Mar. 1916, Serial No. 23, pp. 156-71).

them to have formed. It is to this idea, without doubt, that the tranquility in which he left them at Fulta is due."*

Shiraj was a simple-minded oriental, who did not understand the lying and deceitful nature of the occidental traders in his dominions. It was given out by the English that they were waiting at Fulta only until favourable weather allowed them to set out for Madras. So instead of molesting them, Shiraj was kind to them. Thus Mr. Tooke in his Narrative of the capture of Calcutta wrote:

"Upon our first arrival at Fulta we found provisions and necessarys very scarce, though soon after, upon the Nabob's hearing (as is reported) that the ships intended leaving the river, he ordered the *buzars* or markets to be opened, that he might prevent our plundering and get rid of us the sooner, and as the country was farmed by Manik Chand the Nabob's *duan* (who was appointed President at Calcutta after it was taken) he directed the *buzar* to be continued, as long as we stayed at Fulta, when we had plenty of everything ;. . . ." †

But the English at Fulta returned the kindness of the Nawab by intriguing against him. Thus wrote Major Killpatrick to the Court of Directors, dated, camp near Fort William, 25th January, 1757 :

"What was done since I last had the honour of writing to you, and before the arrival of the squadron, was little more than in keeping up a correspondence with some principal people in the country ; which answered almost all our intentions in gaining of time and having provisions supplyed to us while we were obliged to remain inactive,......"§

Such was the sense of gratitude possessed by the English who professed Christianity, which teaches, "Do unto others as you would be done by"!

The Nawab, with that magnanimity which was quite oriental, did not strike the fallen foe, but left Calcutta on the 24th June, 1756 and arrived at Hugli on the following day. Here he held a Durbar, at which the representatives of the French and Dutch factories were present. The former paid him 3½ lakhs and the latter 4½ lakhs of rupees as contributions to the war expenses. These sums also included *nazaranah* or complimentary presents due on the Nawab's accession. Of course, there was no intention on the part of the Nawab to destroy the settlements of those two nations, for had he been inclined to do so, he could have done it at this opportune moment. He reached Murshidabad on the 11th July, 1756, amid great rejoicings.

But he was not to live long in peace there, as his cousin Shaukat Jang had again raised the standard of revolt against him. As soon as the rains were over, he proceeded against Shaukat Jang. The armies of the two princes met at Rajmahal, where on the 16th of Octoder, 1756, a battle was fought in which Shaukat was killed and Shiraj was victorious. He returned to Murshidabad in triumph and received the congratulations of his subjects, as well as the *firman* of the Emperor of Dehli, confirming him as Nawab of Bengal, Behar and Orissa.

It is now necessary to turn to the English refugees at Fulta. It has been said before that they were not only left unmolested, but were very kindly treated by the orders of

* *Ibid.*, Vol, III, p. 176.

† *Ibid*,, Vol. I, p. 301.

§ *Ibid*:, Vol. II, p. 164.

the Nawab. On the other hand, the sense of gratitude possessed by the English was such that they were, during their stay at Fulta, intriguing and conspiring against him. They sent the news of their disaster to Madras and asked for reinforcements to recapture Calcutta. In the meanwhile they

"determined to open negotiations with the Nawab for their restoration, so as to conceal their real reasons for staying at Fulta." *

The news of the outbreak of hostilities in Bengal had arrived at Madras on the 13th July and one Major Killpatrick with 200 troops embarked on the *Delaware* on the 21st July and arrived at Fulta on the last day of the month. Writes S. C. Hill :

"*To deceive the Nawab,* who might be supposed to have been alarmed at the news of his arrival, Major Killpatrick had already been instructed on the 15th to write and assure him that the British did not bear malice for what had happened in the past, and to ask for a supply of provisions. This letter was ultimately sent to Mr. Hastings, who was still at Cossimbazar, for delivery."†

The above needs no comment ; the words puts in italics tell their own tale.

The news of the loss of Kasimbazar reached Madras on the 3rd August, 1756 and that of the capture of Calcutta on the 16th. The English Councillors of Madras met on the 17th and 18th August to devise measures for the capture of Calcutta. Admiral Watson was consulted on the subject, but he advised the delay of any expedition until the end of September, so that the troops might escape the rainy season.

Clive had been absent from Madras, but on his return there, very probably on the persuasion of his friend Robert Orme, well-known afterwards as the historian of India, he volunteered to command the expedition to Bengal.

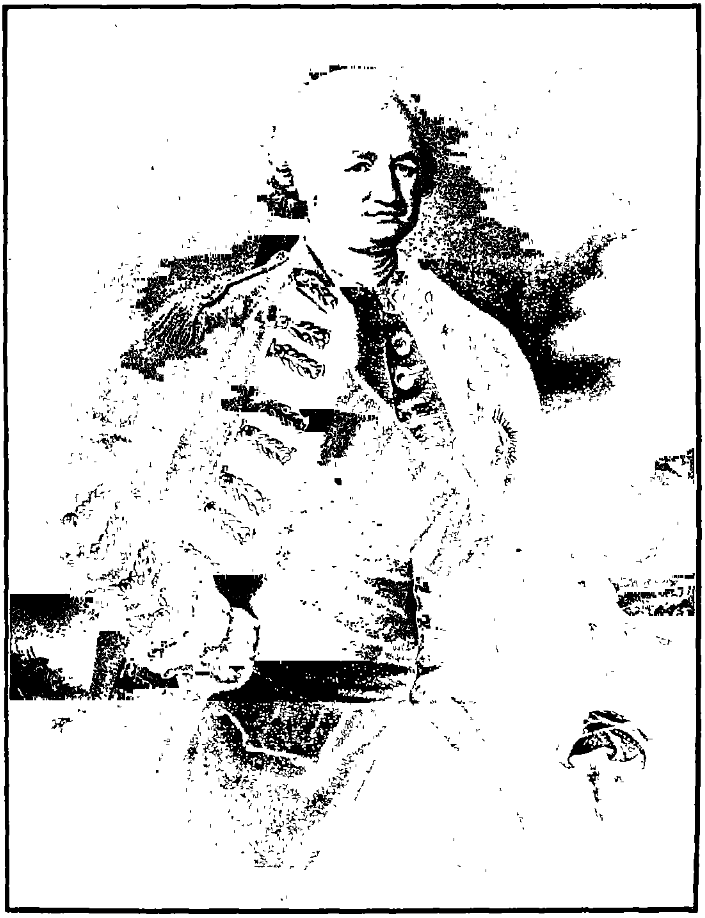
At that time there was an apprehension of the outbreak of war between England and France, and the French were very strong in southern India. It was not thought probable that if war broke out in Europe, the French would observe neutrality in India. However, it was decided by the Madras Council to send a very large force in order to recover Bengal. In the letter from the Select Committee, Fort Saint George, to the Select Committee, Fort-William, dated 21st February, 1757, it was written :

"After struggling with many difficulties in order to put the expedition upon the most advantageous footing as well with regard to the Company as private sufferers, we drained all the garrisons upon the coast to strengthen the detachment preparing for Bengal, and to secure to the utmost of our power a speedy success to our designs.

"But as we were in daily expectation of war with France, and had reason also from the advices of the Secret Committee to apprehend the appearance of a considerable French fleet, we could by no means resolve to put it out of our own power to defend the certain possessions of the Company on this Coast for the hope of uncertain acquisitions in Bengal.

"*Therefore, in order to provide for both necessities to make an effort for the re-establishment of* the Company's affairs in Bengal, and still to have in our hands a security for their possessions on this Coast, in case of need, there was no other method but reserving to ourselves the power of recalling our troops." §

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CXI.
† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CXV.
§ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, 283.



Lord Clive

Under the above conditions, the troops consisting of about 800 Europeans and 1300 sepoys and lascars left Madras in the middle of October, 1756.

The command of the expedition was given to Admiral Watson by sea and to Colonel Clive by land.

The Councillors of Madras did not want merely the restoration of their trade privileges in Bengal, but they advised their compatriots and co-religionists to intrigue and conspire against the Nawab and bring about a revolution in that land. In their letter of 13th October, 1756, the Madras Councillors wrote to the Select Committee, Fort William :

"The mere retaking of Calcutta should we think by no means be the end of this undertaking,—not only their settlements and factories should be restored but all their privileges established in the full extent granted by the *Great Mogul,* and ample reparation made to them for the loss they have lately sustained ; otherwise we are of opinion it would have been better nothing had been attempted, than to have added the heavy charge of this armament to their former loss, without securing their colonies and trade from future insults and exactions.

"Should the Nabob on the news of the arrival of these forces, make offers tending to the acquiring to the Company the before mentioned advantages, rather than risque the success of a war, we think that sentiments of revenging injuries, although they were never more just, should give place to the necessity of sparing as far as possible the many bad consequences of war, besides the expence of the Company's treasures, but we are of opinion that the sword should go hand in hand with the pen, and that on the arrival of the present armament, hostilities should immediately commence with the utmost vigour. These hositilities must be of every kind which can either distress his dominions and estate or bring reprisals into our possession.

"We need not represent to you the great advantage which we think it will be to the military operations, and the influence it will have in the Nabob's Councils to effect a junction with any powers in the provinces of Bengal that may be dissatisfied with the violences of the Nabob's Government, or that may have pretensions to the Nabobship."*

With such treacherous intentions and designs the expedition started for Bengal. The voyage was by no means a pleasant one, as scurvy and sickness broke out on many of the ships. But the forces reached their destination by the middle of December, 1756.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ENGLISH

After arriving in Bengal, Clive addressed, on 15th December, 1756, a letter to Raja Manik Chand, Shiraj's Governor of Calcutta. In this letter was enclosed the draft of a letter for the Nawab. Clive's letter to the Nawab, not being in proper tone, Manik Chand wrote to him on the 23rd December, 1756, forwarding to him copy of a form for a letter which he suggested should be sent by Clive to the Nawab. Regarding Clive's draft of the letter addressed to the Nawab, Manik Chand wrote :

"Finding in it many improper expressions and concluding that by sending me the copy you desired to know my sentiments upon it, I have, therefore, made some alterations in it and return it entrusted to Radha Kissen Mullick, who will deliver it to you. You will write your letter after that form and dispatch it again to me, and I will forward it to the Nawab. You write that you are desirous of peaceable measures. I likewise am as desirous, as nothing is better than peace. To

* *Ibid.,* vol. I, pp. 239—240.

take away every cause of ill-will or contention, this is the part of a good man. For the rest you will be informed from Radha Kissen of my further sentiments."*

While the non-Christian oriental prince and his representative desired nothing better than peace, the Christians, who pray every day to God that His kingdom come on Earth as it is in Heaven, were eagerly thirsting for blood. Clive wrote to Manik Chand on the 25th December, 1756 :

"I cannot consistently with my duty to the Company or their honour, accept of your advice in writing to the Nabob a letter couched in such a stile, which, however proper it might have been before the taking of Calcutta, would but ill suit with the present time, when we are come to demand satisfaction for injuries done us by the Nabob, not to entreat his favour, and with a force which we think sufficient to vindicate our claim." †

But it was not convenient for the English to immediately declare war against the Nawab. No, they were not prepared for it. Like sly foxes, they were watching their opportunity and intriguing and conspiring against Shiraj.

It is said by English historians, for instance, by S. C. Hill, who writes :

"Watson and Clive now thought it necessary to address the Nawab directly, and this they did on the 17th in separate letters of an unmistakably threatening character. It is certain, he received these letters, but it is doubtful whether he made any reply."§

The copies of these letters are given below.

"Letter from Admiral Watson to the Nawab, dated H. M. S 'Kent', at Fulta, in the River Hughly, 17th December, 1756.

"The King, my master (whose name is revered among the monarchs of the world), sent me to these parts with a great fleet to protect the East India Company's trade, rights and privileges. The advantages resulting to the *Mogul's* dominions from the extensive commerce carried on by my master's subjects are too apparent to need enumerating. How great was my surprise therefore to be informed that you had marched against the said Company's factories with a large army, and forcibly expelled their servants, seized and plundered their effects, amounting to a large sum of money, and killed great numbers of the King my master's subjects.

"I am come down to Bengal to re-establish the said Company's servants in their former factories and houses, and hope to find you inclinable to do them that justice as restoring them and as to their ancient rights and immunities. As you must be sensible of the benefit of having the English settled in your country, I doubt not you will consent to make them a reasonable satisfaction for the losses and injuries they have sustained ; and by that piece of justice put an amicable end to those troubles and secure the friendship of the King, my master, who is a lover of peace and delights in acts of equity. What can I say more ?"

"Letter from Colonel Clive to the Nawab, dated 16-17 December, 1756.

"The occasion of my coming here you are already informed by letters from Nabob Sullabut Jung and Anwaroody Cawn and from Governor Pigot. You have likewise heard, I make no doubt, that I have brought with me a larger military force than ever appeared in Bengal. You will judge it therefore prudent both for your own interest and the welfare of your country to consider maturely how injuriously the English settled in the provinces under your jurisdiction have been treated by your people, their houses and factories seized and detained, their effects to a large amount plundered and *great numbers of the Company's servants and other inhabitants inhumanly killed.* These

* *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 74.

† *Ibid.*, p. 76.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. cxxix

are acts of violence which I hope you do not approve of, and expect you will take care to have them severely punished. Your power and personal bravery are universally known; my reputation in war is likewise established by being ten years continually in the field upon the Coast, in which time my undertakings have always been attended (by the blessing of Providence) with success; and I trust in God, that I shall be as fortunate in these parts. Should necessity oblige me to proceed to those extremities one of us must [be] overcome, we cannot both be victorious, and I leave you to reflect how uncertain the fortuue of war is and whether it is your interest to risk so previous [? precious] a decision—to avoid it, you must make proper satisfaction for the losses sustained by the Company, their servants and *riots*, return their factories and invest them in their ancient privileges and immunities. By doing this piece of justice you will make me a sincere friend and get eternal honour to yourself and save the lives of many thousands who must otherwise be slaughtered on both sides without any fault of their own. What can I say more?"

It will be noticed that there is no mention made in these letters of the Black Hole Tragedy.

It is not probable that Clive would have requested Manik Chand to send his letter to the Nawab or opened negotiations with him on the subject, had he addressed the letter of the 17th December directly to the Nawab. But it is more than probable that Clive and his brother officers must have conspired and intrigued with Manik Chand and tempted him to compromise the position of the Nawab. It is on this hypothesis alone that the action at Budge-Budge can be properly explained. Regarding this fight, S. C. Hill writes:

"It was not until the 26th that the pilots reported that the state of the river was favorable for the ships, and even then, probably owing to the late arrival of the *Salisbury*, the advance did not begin until the 27th. The Sepoys were ordered to march overland,.........On the 28th the sepoys reached Mayapur, where they were joined by the Company's troops, and on the 29th arrived at Budge Budge. Here the troops halted near the river-bank in a position where they could be seen from the mast-heads of the ships, but could not see the Fort, as they were themselves surrounded by bushes. Clive had been absolutely unable to obtain any trustworthy intelligence, and without his knowing it, the enemy were encamped within two miles of him. The greater part of his little army was thrown out in different directions, when the small force under his immediate command—about 260 Europeans—was suddenly attacked by a body of 2,000 men, whom Manik Chand had brought down. The fighting lasted for half an hour, the enemy,......were driven off, and the arrival of the king's troops, who had been landed for the attack of the Fort of Budge Budge and had heard the firing, made Clive's position safe......

"The skirmish at Budge Budge took place about mid-day. The fleet, the *Tyger* leading, had arrived before the Fort shortly before 8 A. M. when the fort opened fire upon her. *The fact that the enemy commenced hostilities was duly noted later by the Council and Colonel in their letters to the Nawab and his subjects as a justification for the action of the British.* The enemy were quickly driven from their guns, and the king's troops landed to attack the Fort."*

The argument clothed in the passage italicised in the above extract would not have been advanced by anybody who is either not a fool or a knave. But it served the purpose of the English to parade that as a grievance and a cause of action against the Nawab.

But that Manik Chand was a traitor and was in collusion with the English become almost self-evident facts when we find him deserting the Fort and running away after

Ibid., Vol. I, pp. CXXIX—CXXX.

merely receiving a bullet through his turban. It is said that he ran straight to Murshidabad. To say that he was a coward is no explanation of his desertion and precipitate flight. The fort of Budge-Budge was a very strong one. Regarding it, in a letter to John Cleveland, Esq., dated H. M. S. 'Kent', off Calcutta, in the River Hugli, 31 January, 1757, Admiral Watson wrote:

"This Fort was extremly well situated for defence and had the advantage of a wet ditch round it."*

To run away from such a strong fort after nearly half an hour's fight, does not suggest cowardice but treachery and previous understanding with the English on the part of Manik Chand. The following extract from Revd. Long's Selections from the Government Records also tends to confirm our view:

"The Government (in 1763) agreed to entertain on the Company's pay the son of the deceased Manick Chand, *who was useful to them in various ways during the preceding 30 years,* though he led the Nawab's troops against the English at the battle of Budge-Budge."

The fort at Budge-Budge was taken on the night of the 29th December, 1756. Captain (afterwards Sir Eyre) Coote thus described its capture in his Journal:

"While I was on board, a sailor that was drunk stole away to the fort gate, and fired his pistol and cried out the place was his, upon which the King's, who were next the gate, entered the fort without any opposition; thus the place was taken without the least honour to any one; we found the fort very strong, with a wet ditch all round it, and I had the honor to command it that night."

Of course, the "heathen" inmates of the fort were mostly killed by the "Christians." It is probable that some found means of escape.

Captain Coote made the following entries regarding the progress of the troops under the command of Clive and Watson:

"*December 30th.* Re-embarked the troops, the *sepoys* marched by land.

"*December 31st.* The Fleet proceeded up the river.

"1757, *Jan. 1st.* Came in sight of Tannah Fort, which the enemy had evacuated.

"*Jan. 2nd.* Colonel Clive landed with the Company's troops and the *Kent* and *Tyger* proceeded to Calcutta. About 9 o'clock the Fort fired smartly on the *Tyger*; she was half an hour before she could get a gun to bear; as soon as we could get our guns to bear from the *Kent* and *Tyger,* we ply'd so warmly that they left before 12 o'clock. The Admiral ordered me on shore to hoist the English colours and take the command of the fort for His Majesty.†

Thus Calcutta was very easily re-captured by the Company's servants, for its governor Manik Chand had already fled away.§

It is not necessary to refer in detail to the unseemly quarrel that took place between Clive and Watson for precedence. Both were actuated by sordid greed and desirous of getting for himself the lion's share of the treasure and other worldly goods which they

* *Ibid.,* Vol. II.

† *Ibid.,* Vol. III.

§ S. C. Hill writes that Manik Chand "made no stand at Calcutta, but hastily betook himself to Hugli, whence he sent word to the Nawab at Murshidabad that the British he had now to deal with were a very different kind of men from those whom he had defeated at Calcuttta." Vol. I, p. CXXXVII. This is a clear indication of treachery on the part of Manik Chand.

expected inside the fort at Calcutta. But they were disappointed, for they did not find much worth looting inside. It is greatly to the credit of the Nawab's men that they had not appropriated to themselves the merchandise belonging to the Company. Thus wrote Orme (II. 126):

. "The greatest part of the merchandizes belonging to the Company, which were in the Fort when taken, were found remaining without detriment."

Neither the Moslems nor the "heathens" of India were vandals or "birds of prey" like the "Christians" of the West, and it is due to this fact that they did not touch anything belonging to the Christian merchants.

After the capture of the fort, it was handed over to Drake and the Council on the 3rd January, 1757.

THE TREATY OF ALINAGAR

Shiraj-ud-daula did not bear any malice towards the English. He was ready and willing to grant them the same privileges on which they had traded before. But the English having regained possession of Calcutta thought they were in a position to dictate their own terms to the Nawab and therefore treated him with deliberate contempt and insult. They conspired and intrigued against the Nawab. To bring goodwill and peace on this earth was foreign to these Christians, who, to make their power felt, discussed two plans of operations.

"One was to send a party of sailors by river to Dacca, apparently to seize that town, and possibly to set up one of the sons of Sarfaiaz Khan, who were prisoners there, as a rival to Siraj-ud-daula; the other, easier and more practicable, was to send a small expedition to Hugli and burn the granaries and stores which the Nawab had ordered to be collected near that City."*

The British adventurers from England were descended from the old sea-king robbers. Piracy was the hereditary occupation of many of them. The well-known English politician Sir Charles Dilke, writing in the early seventies of the nineteenth century, was forced to say that listening to the conversation at mess-tables in India they remembered their descent from sea-king robbers; centuries of education had not purified their blood.

It is small wonder that Clive and his countrymen could not resist the temptation of plundering Hugli, which lay undefended. So Hugli was attacked and many of its inhabitants were slaughtered in cold blood and all their earthly belongings looted by the English.

Hugli fort was very easily captured and so it would be thought that the object of the expedition was accomplished. But the English did not think so.

"The 11th January [1757] was spent in plundering the houses round the Fort........

"From this time on to the 18th the troops were occupied in pillaging the native houses, even entering some within the Dutch Settlement on the plea that they belonged to subjects of the Nawab, or that property belonging to his subjects or plunder from Calcutta were concealed in them,"†

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CXXXVIII.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CXI.

When the news of this wanton outrage reached the ears of the Nawab, he, with great self-control and composure, which was peculiarly oriental in character, wrote the following letter (the moderation of which is much to be commended) to Admiral Watson :

"You have taken and plundered *Hugfiley*, and made a war upon my subjects : these are not acts becoming merchants ! I have, therefore, left Murshidabad, and have arrived near Hughley ; I am likewise crossing the river with my army, part of which is advanced towards your camp. Nevertheless, if you have a mind to have the Company's business settled upon its ancient footing, and to give a currency to their trade, send a person of consequence to me, who can make your demands, and treat with me upon this affair. I shall not scruple to grant a Perwannah for the restitution of all the Company's factories, and permit them to trade in my country upon the same terms as formerly. If the English, who are settled in these provinces, will behave like merchants, obey my orders, and give me no offence, you may depend upon it I will take their loss into consideration and adjust matters to their satisfaction.

"You know how difficult it is to prevent soldiers from plundering in war ; therefore, if you will, on your part, relinquish something of the damages you have sustained by being pillaged by my army, I will endeavour to give you satisfaction even in that particular, in order to gain your friendship, and preserve a good understanding for the future with your nation.

"You are a Christian, and know how much preferable it is to accommodate a dispute, than to keep it alive ; but if you are determined to sacrifice the interest of your Company and the good of private merchants to your inclination for war, it is no fault of mine ; to prevent the fatal consequence of such a ruinous war, I write this letter." (Ive's Voyages, p. 109).

Shiraj wrote like a philosopher, and he cannot be sufficiently praised for his statesmanlike views and strong desire for living at peace with the English.

But patching up a friendship with the English was something like building a house on fleeting sand. It was very slippery and uncertain. Perhaps Shiraj had some inkling that Clive and the other British officers had been intriguing with his own courtiers against him. Writes Hill :

"Clive had written to many of the chief persons of the Court asking for assistance, but up till this time (i. e., capture and sack of Hughli) few had thought it necessary to reply."*

So by the showing of English writers themselves it is evident that the intrigue of Clive and his countrymen with the Nawab's courtiers was not unsuccessful. Under these circumstances, Shiraj thought it was impossible for him to successfully wage war against the English. He knew how the latter had raised traitors in his camp who betrayed to them the forts at Budge-Budge and Calcutta. With all these facts before him, he could not think of again crossing swords with the English. As a statesman he had to deal with the circumstances which were then present. And under those circumstances to try to gain the friendship of the English instead of making them his enemies was the only alternative left to Shiraj. The English, seeing the anxiety of the Nawab to make friendship with them, made the following proposals as the indispensable conditions of their alliance with him :

"(1.) That the British should receive complete reparation for all their losses.

"(2.) That the Company should be allowed the full exercise of all its privileges in Bengal.

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* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CXLI (footnote).

"(3.) That the British should have the right to fortify their settlements as they pleased.

"(4.) That the Company should have a Mint at Calcutta."

Excepting the last one, which it was not in the power of the Nawab to grant,—for it was only the Delhi Emperor who could do so—the Nawab was willing to grant the other three proposals. But the English went on increasing their demands and asking more and more on each new occasion. Thus when the Nawab asked them to send their envoys to his *Durbar*, Messrs. Amyat and Hastings, who were deputed; not only made those demands which have been already mentioned above, but also the following three additional ones, *viz* :

"(1.) That the Nawab should not demand or molest any of the merchants or inhabitants of Calcutta;

"(2.) That the *dastak* of the British should protect all their boats and goods passing through the country;

"(3.) That articles to the above effect should be signed and sealed by the Nawab and his Ministers."

The Nawab, who had left Murshidabad with his army, reached Calcutta on the 4th February, 1757. Here, he was accommodated in the garden house of Amir Chand. Clive and his colleagues, meaning treachery to the Nawab, determined to despatch Messrs. Walsh and Scrafton to him with the Select Committee's proposals. Of course, these deputies were sent to spy out the Nawab's camp. M. Jean Law wrote:

"To deceive him (Siraj) more completely and examine the position of his camp the English sent deputies the day before the attack they meditated. These deputies were ordered to propose an accommodation, but the very conditions must have shown the Nawab this was only a ruse on the parts of his enemy."*

The deputies did what they had been directed to do. Then they retired to their tents, and, pretending to go to sleep, they put out their lights and made their escape in the darkness. The Engligh were, of course, ready to attack the Nawab. So when their two spies joined them, the troops under Clive and other officers attacked the Nawab's camp early the next morning. M. Jean Law wrote:

"The next day, the 5th January, at 4 or 5 A. M., in a thick fog, the English, commanded by Colonel Clive, attacked the Nawab's camp and fell precisely upon the tent in which the deputies had seen him the evening before. (I heard this from several Moorish officers who were in the Nawab's army). Luckily for him, he was not there. One of his *diwans* who suspected the deputation had advised him to pass the night in a tent further off. At first the English drove the Moors before them like a flock of sheep and killed 1.200 to 1,500 men, *sepoys* and camp-sutlers, 600 horses at their pickets and a number of draught oxen. The Nawab was terrified, fled as fast as he could and did not stop till he was sixteen miles above Calcutta. However, after the first fire some officers rallied their men and made a stand, amongst others a body of Persian cavalry who charged with great courage. This firmness, joined to the fact that the day was clearing, determined Colonel Clive to withdraw. The English had more than 200 men, black and white, killed or wounded in this action, and in the retreat lost two field-pieces the carriages of which had broken down."

* *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 182. It is also probable that Raja Naba Krishna also played the part of a spy and kept the English informed of the movements and doings of the Nawab.

The conduct of the English was highly reprehensible. They were negotiating for peace with the Nawab, who did not therefore anticipate any foul treachery on their part. So the attack on the Nawab's camp cannot be justified. As said before, the English had raised traitors in his camp. It was due to this fact, more than to anything else, that Shiraj-ud-daula could not gain any advantage over them. Although M. Jean Law says that he ran away from the field of battle, it is doubtful if he really did so. For, another compatriot of Law's, M. Renault, in a letter to the Marquis Dupleix, dated Chandernagore, 4th September, 1757, wrote:

"In the meantime the English, who had for some days been face to face with the Nawab, attacked his camp at dawn. Though they sent all their soldiers, and added the crews of all their ships, and managed to surprise the Moors, they got less advantage than they expected from this combat. After having gained some ground on the enemy they could not keep it against Siraj-ud-daula, who had rallied a part of his army; they retreated in disorder and only too fortunate in being able to put themselves under the protection of the guns of their Fort, having lost in this action nearly two hundred men."*

But the unfortunate Nawab had not only to contend with his enemies, but also with the traitors in his camp whom they had raised. On the authority of Scrafton S. C. Hill wrote of Shiraj-ud-daula:

"On his march down he had found many of his soldiers, and even some of his officers, unwilling to follow him."†

Even so early as the beginning of 1757, it would seem from the following that the English were intriguing and conspiring with Mir Jafar against Shiraj. Scrafton in his Reflections, p. 66, wrote that Shiraj-ud-daula

"discovered some appearance of disaffection in some of his principal officers, particularly in Meer Jaffer, whose conduct in this affair had been very mysterious."

So the Nawab was obliged to accede to the proposals of the English. M. Renault proceeded to write, in the letter from which an extract has already been given above, that

"the Ministers of the Nawab, almost all of whom were partisans of the English, desiring only to make peace, profited by this occasion to bring the Nawab to it and he, forced by the mutinous disposition of his generals,......found himself, contrary to his own wishes, obliged to consent and even to submit to extremely hard conditions."§

Under such circumstances, the Nawab concluded the Treaty known as the Treaty of Alinagar with the English on the 9th February, 1756. The terms of the Treaty were as follows:

"1. All privileges granted by the Emperor of Delhi to the British to be confirmed.

"2. All goods under the British *dastak* to pass free throughout Bengal, Behar and Orissa.

"3. The Company's Factories and all goods and effects belonging to the Company, its servants or tenants. which had been taken by the Nawab to be restored; a sum of money to be paid for what had been plundered or pillaged by the Nawab's people.

* *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 246.

† Ibid., Vol. I, p. CXLVII.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 246—247.

"4. Calcutta to be fortified as the British thought proper.

"5. The British to have the right to coin *siccas.*

"6. The Treaty to the ratified by the Nawab and his chief officers and ministers.

"7. Admiral Watson and Colonel Clive to promise on behalf of the English nation and Company to live on good terms with the Nawab so long as the latter observed the Treaty.

Such were the conditions of the Treaty forced on the Nawab. But the English, not satisfied with the hard terms imposed on the Nawab, made further demands on him. Writes S. C. Hill :

"No sooner was the Treaty signed than the Select Committee began to regret that they had allowed the Nawab such easy terms, and asked Clive to call a Council of war to consider whether the British were not strong enough to force him to grant better ones. The Council replied that, all circumstances considered, it was not advisable to press the Nawab further, and so, fortunately for the credit of the British, the Committee determined not to break the Treaty which it had only just signed."*

Of course, the British, like the wolf in the fable, were on the look-out for the pretext of a muddied stream to devour the Nawab. And how they managed it would be mentioned further on. Yet English writers are audacious enough to give credit to their own co-religionists and compatriots for being "determined not to break the Treaty."

CAPTURE OF CHANDERNAGAR

It has been already mentioned that hardly the ink on the Treaty which the British had concluded with Shiraj was dry when they regretted to have made such a treaty at all. So they were trying all means that lay in their power to break it. But with that consummate hypocrisy of which the co-religionists and compatriots of Clive were masters, they tried to make the Moslem prince appear as the delinquent party. They discovered some loopholes in the Treaty which they strained in their favour. Hill, speaking of the Treaty, writes that

"The manner of the Nawab's acceptance is neither clear nor satisfactory—*e.g.,* in reference to the demand for restitution for the losses of the British the Nawab only promised to restore or pay for such property as had been entered in his own books, thus taking no account of the property that had been plundered by his soldiers or which had been secreted by his officers. This was made the subject of further demands.

"In addition to this no notice was taken in the Treaty of the losses of the private sufferers, but the Nawab verbally promised a sum of 3 *lakhs* for this purpose, and also, it seems, a particular sum to recoup Colonel Clive and Major Killpatrick for their personal losses."†

Thus it will be seen that the British were not satisfied with the Treaty. But they congratulated themselves upon inducing the Nawab to agree to an English envoy being sent to Murshidabad. This was the cause of all the troubles and evils that befell Shiraj-ud-daula. General Gordon, who was killed at Khartoum by the Mahdi and his followers, gave the following certificate to the diplomatists of his race and creed :

* *Ibid.,* Vol. I, p. CXLIX.

† *Ibid.,* Vol. I, p. CXLIX.

"I must say, I hate our diplomatists. I think with few exceptions they are arrant humbugs, and I expect they know it. I include the Colvin class." (General Gordon's Journal, p. 158).

Again, in another place of his journal, he wrote:

"We are an honest nation, but our diplomatists are conies, and not officially honest."*

Of course, these European envoys are highly proficient in the art of intrigues and like white ants by travelling underground destroy those kingdoms, states and principalities to which they get an access. So, had Shiraj-ud-daula been wise in his generation, he would have strongly declined the honor of receiving a British envoy at his court.

Mr. Watts was selected as an envoy to represent the English at the Court of the Nawab. His chief recommendation was that he was very well versed in the country language, and in its politics and customs.† He was instructed to intrigue and conspire against the Nawab. The Council of War which on the 12th February, 1757—after the ratification of the Treaty of Alinagar—decided not to renew hostilities but to gain their objects by diplomacy, suggested the appointment of Mr. Watts as their envoy. In their letter to the Select Committee, dated Fort William, 12th February, 1757, Messrs. Clive, Killpatrick, etc., wrote that they were

"of opinion other articles may be asked, not demanded and that a gentleman deputed to the Nabob who understands the language and the customs of the country may not only be a means of getting them granted but likewise be of great use in many other matters, both public and private, which cannot be so properly done in writing."

To Mr. Watts the Select Committee in their letter dated 16th February, 1757, wrote that,

"as many things have been omitted in this treaty, and as some require explaining to prevent future causes of disputes and evasions, we are to direct you will strenuously apply to the Nabob upon the following heads:

"First. You must demand that the *phirmand, husbul hookums* and other royal grants be enrolled in the *Mogul's* Books... that strict obedience be publickly ordered to the contents thereof, that the Nabob do send *perwannahs* to the zemindars of the villages granted to the Company by the royal *perwannahs* to deliver those towns to the English...

"Secondly. You must get the article of the Mint explained in fuller terms and extend the liberty of coining to all bullion and gold imported into Calcutta by the English.

"Thirdly. As the Nabob has consented to our *dustucks* passing in the country without being liable to any tax, fee or imposition from the *chokeys*, we doubt not he will permit us to punish the offenders of this article ourselves without a tedious complaint at the Durbar...

"Fourthly. We think the article of restitution is by the Nabob worded in a very loose manner. On your arrival therefore at Muxadavad, you must desire an exact account of all moneys, goods and effects entered in the Nabob's *sircarry*. But as the Nabob must be sensible the Company's servants and private inhabitants have lost an immense sum in money and goods, of which no account has been given in his Books, it is but reasonable and just some restitution should be made them...

"Fifthly. Should private restitution be refused, you must press the Nabob to take upon himself the discharge of all debts due from the English to his subjects or to the natives in general, as his violence and the pillage of his people have incapacitated us from paying those debts.

"Sixthly. We think it would not be improper to mention that the Courts of Justice established

* *Ibid.*, p. 15.

† Scrafton's *Reflections*, p. 68.

by His Majesty's Charter should be allowed of, and privilege given us to try, condemn. and execute all natives residing within our bounds if found guilty of capital crimes.

"Seventhly. Being determined to employ Europeans in future at the *Durbar* the Nabob must promise them a civil reception whenever the Governor and Council think it proper to depute any to attend him...we expect in future to be liable to no payment of money or presents on making visits.

"Eighthly. Could we obtain a promise from the Nabob that he will not erect any fortifications below Calcutta within a mile of the river, it would be very useful, but there is no necessity to demand this concession.

"Ninthly. As it is probable the Honourable Company may judge it proper to order the re-establishing of their factory at Patna, we desire you will apply for liberty to repossess it whenever we think proper, without any expense of presents or money to the *Durbar*...

Lastly. That you desire positive orders be sent to all his officers and people to return all Books, Papers and Accounts that are in their possession belonging to the English."

Amin Chand accompanied Mr. Watts as his agent and adviser.

It will be observed from the instructions given to Mr. Watts that the English wanted to break the Treaty they had ratified with the Nawab, because their demands were so extraordinary and extravagant and that these not being included in the original Treaty, no self-respecting Prince could have granted them. But the English were bent upon mischief and wanted to exasperate the Nawab and thus provoke him to hostilities.

Hill writes:

"The errand Mr. Watts had been sent upon was a very difficult one; he had not merely to obtain the fulfilment of the Treaty, but to have it interpreted in the most generous manner possible and also to contrive the Nawab's acceptance of several other articles which, if they had been touched on at all, were not included in the actual Treaty."*

Mr. Watts knew that it was impossible for him to make the Nawab agree to grant those demands which the English had made upon him. Therefore he chose the least honourable course, *viz.*, that of intriguing and conspiring against the Nawab and also committing mischief in various other ways. In his "Memoirs of the Revolution," Mr. Watts has written that at Murshidabad nothing could be done except

"by opposing corruption to corruption, making friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, and getting upon even grounds with those with whom we were obliged to contend."

Hill, after making the above extract from Watt's Memoirs, adds:

"Mr. Watts seems to have had no hesitation in playing the game in the oriental style."†

Of course Mr. Watts, like his other compatriots of those days in India, was altogether devoid of all sense of honor and honesty and he played the game not in the oriental but quite in the occidental style. The orientals whom he imposed upon were simple-minded enough not to see through the designs of the occidental Christians.

Mr. Watts had to surrender the factory at Kassimbazar and was made a prisoner by Shiraj-ud-daula. It is an English saying that vengeance sleeps long but it never dies. Mr. Watts, imagining himself to have been ill used by Shiraj-ud-daula, was trying his utmost to ruin him. It was he who suggested to the Select Committee, Fort William,

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CLX.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CIX.

to attack the French without obtaining the permission of the Nawab. In his letter to the Select Committee, dated 25th February, 1756, he wrote:—

"If we attack and take Chandernagore, every part of our agreement will be fulfilled and more indulgences granted us. If we are unsuccessful, we shall get nothing and if a neutrality is concluded with the French no chicanery, artifice, or cunning will be left untried to delay putting us in possession of what the Nabob has assented to. The Nabob marches to Patna in a few days, when we shall be left to demand satisfaction of his *duan, Moinloll,* a most rapacious, avaritious Minister, in treating with whom we shall meet with nothing but obstacles and difficulties................*We shall never be able to get a publick order or leave to attack the French.*"*

The English had exerted their utmost to get inserted in the Treaty a clause which would bind the Nawab to attack and crush the French in their territory. But this the Nawab refused to do. Writes Hill:

"There was, however, one matter of which the British could not obtain a satisfactory settlement. Clive had proposed to the Nawab's envoys an alliance against, and an immediate attack upon, the French. To this the Nawab would not agree."†

The French like the English were trading in the Nawab's dominions and had not given him any trouble, which the latter had done. So the proposal to attack them which the English made to him appeared to the Nawab too horrid to entertain, and so he would not agree to it.

It is true that in his private letters to Admiral Watson, dated 9th Feb. 1757, the Nawab wrote:

"As long as I have life I shall esteem your enemies as enemies to me, and will assist you to the utmost of my power whenever you may require it."

He wrote to Colonel Clive to the same effect on the 11th Feb. 1757.

Says Hill:

"These letters the British held to be as binding upon the Nawab as the Treaty itself, and his refusal to carry out his private promises they considered to be a breach of the Treaty."§

Of course, none but a fool or a knave would advance an argument like the above as an indictment against the Nawab. He did not violate any treaty or even any promise privately made. He had distinctly made the English understand that he would not attack the French when they made that proposal to him and to have it inserted as a clause in the Treaty itself. Besides, he did not consider the French *in Bengal* as enemies of the English, for, within his dominions, they had not done any harm to the latter. As ruler of Bengal, it was he who had to decide who were the friends or enemies of any particular community.

After the ratification of the Treaty of Alinagar Shiraj left Calcutta for his capital impressed with the belief that he would not any longer have any cause for hostilities with any Christian nation and that peace and prosperity would reign in his dominions. But this proposal of the English to attack and crush the French soon undeceived him. He had not yet reached his capital when he received the intelligence of the meditated

* *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 256.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CXLIX.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CXLIX.

attack of the English on the French. So he lost no time in acquainting the English with his views on the subject. He wrote to Admiral Watson on the 19th February, 1757:

"To put an end to the hostilities in my country and dominions, I consented and agreed to the treaty of peace with the *English*, that trade and commerce might be carried on as formerly, to which treaty you have agreed, and a firm accommodation between us is settled and established; you have likewise sent me an agreement, under your own hand and seal, not to disturb the tranquility of my country; but it now appears that you have a design to besiege the *French* factory near Hoogley, and to commence hostilities against that nation. *This is contrary to all rule and custom, that you should bring your animosities and differences into my country*; for it has never been known since the days of *Timur*, that the Europeans made war upon one another within the King's dominions. If you are determined to besiege the *French* factories, I shall be necessitated in honor and duty to my king, to assist them with my troops. You seem inclined to break the treaty so lately concluded between us; formerly the *Mahrattas* infested these dominions, and for many years harassed the country with war, but when the dispute was accommodated, and a treaty of peace with that people concluded, they never broke, nor will they ever deviate from the terms of the said treaty. It is a wrong and wicked practice, to break through and pay no regard to treaties made in the most solemn manner; you are certainly bound to abide by your part of the treaty strictly, and never to attempt or be the occasion of any troubles or disturbances in future within the provinces under my jurisdiction. I will on my part observe most punctually what I have promised and consented to.

"I will maintain and preserve on my part the treaty of peace I have made with the English, which with the permission of God I hope will continue for ever. You may have heard, that for seven vears, we had constant wars with the Mahrattas, but when a treaty of peace was concluded with them, they strictly observed the terms, and never deviated from them. It is but just and reasonable that your nation should pay regard to the late treaty, and commit no hostilities in my country, nor disturb its tranquility with any differences, that may subsist between you and other European powers."*

The above letter most clearly and in no equivocal or diplomatic language expressed the views of Shiraj-ud-daula with regard to the proposed expedition of the English against the French. He pointed out to them that they intended to break the treaty which they had recently concluded with him. He asked them to abide by the terms of the Treaty. He wondered how a nation which called itself "Christian," should lack in all those virtues which were possessed by the Mahrattas and other "heathens" of India. He wrote again on the following day :

"The letter I wrote to you yesterday, I imagine you have received; since which I have been informed by the *French Vakeel* that five or six additional ships of war have arrived in the river, and that more are expected. He represents likewise, that you design commencing hostilites against me and my subjects again, as soon as the rains are over. This is not acting agreeable to the character of a true soldier, and a man of honor, who never violated their words. If you are sincere in the treaty concluded with me, send your ships of war out of the river, and abide steadfastly by your agreement; I will not fail in the observance of the treaty on my part. Is it becoming or honest to begin a war, after concluding the peace so lately and solemnly? The *Maharathas* are bound by no *gospel*, yet they are strict observers of treaties. It will therefore be matter of great astonishment, and hard to be believed, if you, who are enlightened with the *gospel*, should not remain firm, and preserve the treaty you have ratified in the presence of *God* and *Jesus Christ*."

Of course, the perfidious Christian admiral was furious with rage, because the

Ive's *Voyages*, pp. 119-120.

conspiracy which he and his compatriots were hatching against Shiraj was suspected by the Nawab. So the Admiral wrote to the Moslem Prince in the tone of injured innosence. In his letter of the 25th of February, 1757, to the Nawab, Admiral Watson wrote:

"Your letter of the 20th instant I received two days ago, but being just in the height of my dispatches for *England* I was not able to answer it till now. I know not how to express to you my astonishment, at finding myself taxed with having a design to break the peace, on so slight a foundation as a base fellow's having dared to tell you so, without any one action of mine being produced to support so extravagant and impudent an accusation, which has not the least shadow of probability to render it credible. You tell me, 'It is unworthy the character of a *soldier*, and man of *honour*, to violate their words!' In what single instance, since my being here, have I acted so unworthily as to make you think me capable of violating mine? Yourself can answer for me, *in none*. My dealing with you hath always been full of that frankness and sincerity for which my countrymen are remarkable throughout the known world. From you sir, I expect justice on that base man, who has dared falsely to accuse me, and to impose upon you. In the meantime, I have complained to the *French* of their *Vackeel's* behaviour; who have promised me to write to you their knowledge of the falsity of his accusation. You may rest assured, that I will always religiously observe the peace; and I beg you to believe, that people who raise reports to the contrary, can only do it to create jealousies, which they hope will break the friendship they are sorry to see between us."

The above letter, as was to be expected from a perfidious man trained in occidental diplomacy in the school of Macchiavelli and Talleyrand, was full of hypocrisy, insincerity and falsehood. Watson did not, for he could not, answer the questions put to him in a straightforward manner by Shiraj. Was it true or was it not, that five or six additional ships of war had arrived in the river? Watson's letter did not remove from the mind of the Nawab the suspicions he entertained of the conduct of the English towards him. According to the terms of the Treaty the latter were to assist him in his hour of necessity with men and money. To deprive them of their troops and thus prevent them from committing any hostilities in his dominions, he asked them to lend him their troops, with which he proposed to march towards Patna to meet the Delhi Emperor's forces, which, it was rumoured, had been despatched against him. He wrote to Watson:

"The letter you wrote me about the *French* affair, I have received and perused. You may depend [upon] it, that I neither have nor will assist the *French*. If they begin any trouble or commit any hostilities in my territories, I will oppose them with my whole force, and punish them very severely. I was informed you designed to attack *Chandernagore*, which made me write you what I thought was reasonable and just upon that head. The forces I sent down were to guard and protect the King's subjects, and not to assist the *French*. If the purport of my letter has been the occasion of your desisting from the attack of *Chandernagore*, it gives me great satisfaction. I have written the *French* likewise what I thought was proper, in order to make them apply for a neutrality; I suppose they will act conformably. I will send a person of consideration to bring me the treaty you may conclude with them, and will order it to be registered in my books. Assure yourself that I have no other design or inclination than to live upon terms of good understanding and friendship with the *English*. By the grace of God, I never intend to do any thing that you will not esteem just; this rely upon, and do not expect a failure. Do you likewise remain fixed to your treaty and word, and give no credit to the reports of people of no consideration

Admiral Watson
From an Engraving by Fisher, after a Painting by Hudson

or figure. If you have anything to write about, please to address me, and nobody else; I will always send a fair and unreserved answer.

"The van of the King of Dehli's army is advancing towards these provinces; upon this intelligence I design marching towards Patna to meet them. If at this critical juncture you will be my friend, and send me assistance, I will pay your forces a lack of rupees monthly, while they remain with me. Send me an immediate answer."

This last request of the Nawab involved him in his ruin, for it gave the English a pretext to move their troops from Calcutta as if to assist him but in reality with the intentions of reducing the French settlements at Chandernagar first and then to attack him.

Watts, the envoy of the English at Murshidabad, in order to be avenged on Shiraj-ud-daula, was writing to Calcutta to incite his compatriots against the Nawab and not to make peace with the French. Writes S. C. Hill:

"On the 25th February, Watts wrote to Calcutta that it was impossible to rely upon the Nawab, and that it would be wise to attack Chandernagore without delay, as influenced by Manik Chand and Coja Wajid, the Nawab had again ordered Mir Jafar to march."*

The Christian Admiral Watson, thinking that Shiraj-ud-daula being threatened with the invasion of his dominions by the Mughal Emperor's troops must be in perplexity and in a fix, considered that moment to be the most favorable to play on the fears of the Nawab and to gain his nefarious ends. He addressed the Nawab the following letter, which was certainly not worded very courteously:

"I answered your letter of the 20th of last month some days past; I suppose you have ere now received it, and are thereby fully convinced of the falsehood of the *French Vakeel's* informations of my intention to break the peace. If you still want further proofs of the sincerity with which I made it, and the desire I have to preserve it, you will find them in my *patience*; which has not only suffered your part of the treaty to be thus long unexecuted, but has even borne with your assisting my enemies the *French* with men and money; contrary to your faith pledged to me in the most solemn manner, 'that my enemies should be yours.'

"*Is it thus that soldiers and men of honour never violate their words*?" But it is time now to speak *plain*: if you are really desirous of preserving your country in peace, and your subjects from misery and ruin, in *ten days* from the date of this, fulfill your part of the treaty in *every article*, that I may not have the least cause of complaint; otherwise remember, you must answer for the consequences; and as I have always acted the open, unreserved part in all my dealings with you; I now acquaint you, that the remainder of the troops, which should have been here long since (and which I hear the Colonel told you he expected) will be at *Calcutta* in a few days; that in a few days more I shall dispatch a vessel for more ships and more troops; and that I will kindle such a flame in your country, as all the water in the *Ganges* shall not be able to extinguish. Farewell: remember that he promises you this, who never yet broke his word with you, or with any man whatsoever."†

The Christian admiral showed himself in his true colors. So the treaty he had signed and his letters to the Nawab in which the admiral assured him "in the presence of God and of Jesus Christ" that he would observe peace in his couutry were mere cant and hypocrisy and meant to gain time. In the original treaty there was no time

* *Bengal Records*, 1756-1757, Vol. I, CLXI.

† Ive's *Voyages*, p. 124.

limit fixed during which the articles of the treaty were to be executed. So now for the Christian admiral to ask the Nawab to give effect to the terms of the Treaty within ten days was merely a pretext for commencing hostilities. Shiraj-ud-daula, with the characteristic courtesy of a born gentleman and an Oriental, answered the Christian admiral as follows :

"I have already answered the letter you wrote me some days ago. Be so good as to consider the purport of what I wrote, (concerning the King of *Delhi*), and send me a speedy reply. I am fixed and determined to abide by the terms of the treaty we have concluded, but have been obliged to defer the execution of the articles on account of the *Hooly*, during which holidays my Banians and ministers do not attend the *Durbar*. As soon as that is over, I will strictly comply with every thing I have signed. You are sensible that there is no avoiding this delay, and I flatter myself it will not be thought much of. It is not my custom to break any treaty I make, therefore be satisfied that I will not endeavour to evade that which I have made with the *English*. I rely on your friendship and bravery in giving me the assistance I asked against the van of the *Pytan* army who are advancing this way, and that you will oblige me with a compliance to the request I made in my last letter. What shall I say more ?

"I beg you will be sensible of my sincerity. I promise you in the most faithful manner, that I will never break or infringe my part of the treaty I have made with your nation.

"This you may be sure of, that if any person or persons attempt to quarrel with you, or become your enemies, I have sworn before God that I will assist you. I have never given the *French* a single *cowry*, and what forces of mine are at *Hougnley*, were sent to *Nundcomar* the *Fougedar* of that place : the *French* will never dare to quarrel with you ; and I persuade myself that you will not, contrary to ancient custom, commit any hostilities within the *Ganges*, or in the provinces of which I am *Soubadar*."*

Shiraj wrote as befitted a prince. The cause of the delay in the execution of the terms of the Treaty was very reasonable. It is a fact well known all over the world, how delays occur in the execution of even the decree of a law court. There is very often delay also in the execution of the terms of treaties between civilized and Christian powers. But no nation threaten their late enemy within a month of the ratification of a treaty with hostilities. Moreover, Shiraj had very good grounds for believing, and he wrote about it often to the Admiral that the English were not sincere in the observance of the treaty they had made with him. Under all these circumstances, no one except interested parties can blame him for not executing the terms of the Treaty imposed upon him by the adventurers of England.

Shiraj had asked Watson to help him with troops to meet the Mughal Emperor's force sent against him. But the Admiral sent him an evasive reply. Wrote Watson :

"You are going to *Patna*—you ask our assistance.—Can we with the least degree of prudence march with you, and leave our enemies behind us ? You will be then too far off to support us, and we shall be unable to defend ourselves. Think what can be done in this situation. I see but one way. Let us take *Chandernagore*, and secure ourselves against any apprehensions from that quarter, and then we will assist you with every man in our power, and go with you even to *Dehli*, if you will."†

Watson's proposal did not commend itself to Shiraj. But the Admiral was determined on hostilities with the French and taking Chandernagar. The French had sent their

* *Ibid.*, pp. 124 and 125.

† *Ibid.*, p. 125.

deputies to Calcutta to get a treaty concluded to bind both the Christian nations to observe neutrality in Bengal. But it was Watson who was opposed to the Treaty.

"On the 4th March the Admiral declared himself dissatisfied, and refused to sign the treaty which had already been drawn up."*

Watson, of course, wanted to shed blood and to wage war both against the French and Shiraj. In his letter to the Select Committee, Fort William, dated 3rd March, 1757, he wrote that

"the treaty ought not to take place till such time it is returned from Pondicherry ratified and confirmed and then upon your signifying to me my observing such a neutrality will be the properest step that can be taken for the advantage of the Company's affairs. I shall upon such a representation have no objection to giving you my promise thereto.†

How determined he was to go to war against the Nawab is clear from the following passages in the letter:

"It is now three weeks since the Peace commenced in which many Articles were promised by him. Are they yet complied with ? Give me leave to go a little further and ask when they will be complied with ? I am afraid it is too difficult a question to be answered with any degree of exactness. Is it reasonable then to suppose if the Nabob should sign this guarantee and swear to the observance of it, that he will pay any more regard to that than he has done to the fulfilling the several Articles of the Peace ? Or is it the policy of this country to place your confidence in the man who has not observed his word, though bound by the most solemn protestations ? . . . I by no means think the Nabob ought to be addressed on this subject, till he has faithfully fulfilled all the Articles of the Peace, and that appears to me to be the most necessary business to be hastened, and I think as short time as possible should be given him for the completing it."§

Even Clive was alarmed at the attitude assumed by Watson. Addressing the members of the Select Committee on the 4th March, 1757, he said:

"Do but reflect, gen lemen, what will be the opinion of the world of these our late proceedings. Did we not, in consequence of a letter received from the Governor and Council of Chandernagore making offers of a neutrality within the Ganges, in a manner accede to it by desiring they would send deputies, and that we would gladly come into such a neutrality with them ; and have we not since their arrival drawn out Articles that were satisfactory to both parties, and agreed that each Article should be reciprocally signed, sealed and sworn to ? What will the Nabob think ? After promises made him on our side and after his consenting to guarantee this neutrality, he and all the world will certainly think that we are men of a trifling, insignificant disposition, or that *we are men without principles.* It is therefore incumbent on us to exculpate ourselves by declaring the real truth, that we are entirely ignorant of Mr. Watson's intentions to refuse the neutrality in the manner proposed and settled by us, and that we always thought him of a contrary opinion to what his letter declares. I am persuaded these must be the sentiments of gentlemen of the Committee, or they never would have gone such lengths as must expose them to the censure of all reasonable men."

But these reasonable words of Clive fell on deaf ears. Hill writes:

"Clive was in despair, for the Admiral would not make a treaty with the French because Mr. Renault had not power to sign one, and he would not attack Chandernagore because he had not obtained the Nawab's permission. Accordingly, on the 5th March he submitted a request to the

* *Bengal Records*, Vol. I, p. CLXI.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 268.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 269-270.

Select Committee to allow him to return to Madras, as he considered it disgraceful to negotiate with the French if the negotiations were not intended to result in peace. When the Admiral refused to sign the Treaty the French immediately wrote to that effect to the Nawab, published a manifesto, and sent away their women and children to Chinsurah. The Nawab ordered a force under Rai Durlabh to march at once.

"On the 6th, as the Admiral was still immovable, it was formally debated in Council whether the British should attack Chandernagore or not, and Council decided to postpone all consideration of the Treaty until the Nawab had been appealed to again, as he had written to Clive explaining that the troops sent to Hugli were not to assist the French, but to keep order in the town, and to inform him that the Emperor's army was about to invade Bengal."*

But how to obtain the permission of the Nawab was the question with the English. Shiraj had in unmistakable terms expressed his detestation of their proposal to attack the French. So, if appealed to again, he was not likely to accede to their request.

What they could not gain by fair means they thought they would be able to achieve by occidental diplomacy. Mr. Watts was their envoy at Murshidabad and to him Clive turned for assistance. In a letter to Watts dated 25th February, 1757 Clive wrote:

"How can what the Nabob expresses by words of mouth be confided in when he writes etters with his own *Chop* (seal), positively forbidding us to attack the French. If he answers my letter immediately and gives me but the least hint that he will not interfere, it is not too late: whilst his letters are extant against us and nothing but a few promises made us, and those too at second hand, what will the world think of our conduct should our design miscarry?"†

Clive, afterwards a forger himself, suggested to Mr. Watts to do something of that nature to strengthen his hands and enable him to attack the French. The suggestion was not lost on Mr. Watts. The Nawab's secretary was in the pay of the British envoy.§ He wrote on behalf of the Nawab a letter to Watson on the 10th March, which concluded as follows:

"You have understanding and generosity; if your enemy, with an upright heart, claims your protection, you will give him his life; but then you must be well satisfied of the innocence of his intentions; if not, whatever you think right that do."

Surgeon Ives, who quotes the whole letter in his "Voyages" (pp. 125-126), in a footnote on page 126 says that it is "from Mr. Watts's translation"; and in another footnote to the same letter on page 125 says that "it was this paragraph that encouraged the Admiral and Colonel to proceed in their attack of *Chandernagore*."

The genuineness of this paragraph of the letter has been questioned by two Christians of two different nationalities, *viz.*, M. Jean Law and also Scrafton. The former wrote in his "Memoirs" how the English had corrupted the officers of the Nawab's army and Court.

"The English had on their side all the chief officers in the army of the Nawab, Mir Jafar Ali Khan, Khodadad Khan Latty, and a number of others whom their presents and the influence of the Seths attached to them, all the Ministers of the old Court disgraced by Siraj-ud-daula,

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CLXI

† *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 245-246.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CLXII.

nearly all the secretaries, the writers of the *Durbar* and even the eunuchs of the harem. What effect could they not expect from all these forces united and put in motion by a man so skilfnl as Mr. Watts."*

In a footnote to the above, M. Jean Law adds :

"Witness the letter written to the English Admiral Watson, by which it is pretended the Nawab authorised him to undertake the siege of Chandernagore. The English Memoir confesses it was a surprise, and that the secretary must have been bribed to write in a way suitable to the views of Mr. Watts. The Nawab never read the letters which he ordered to be written ; besides, the Moors never sign their names. The envelope being closed and well fastened, the secretary asks the Nawab for his seal, and seals it in his presence. Often there is a counterfeit seal."

According to Scrafton also,† the English had to spend a good deal of money in bribing the Nawab's secretariat to get the above-mentioned letter written in a way suitable to their views.

But even assuming that the letter was written not only with the consent, but by the hand, of Shiraj-ud-daula, it was worded in courteous terms and it certainly did not permit the English to exterminate the French. It should be remembered that the original letter in Persian is not in existence. The translation in English was done by Watts, who probably turned and twisted the words in the original in such a manner as to suit the interests of his countrymen. Reading the letter between the lines, no disinterested man can say that it gave permission to the English to attack the French. Even Scrafton, in his *"Reflections,"* writes :

"This letter may be very well understood, as a consent to our attacking the French, though it certainly was never meant as such."

But even before the receipt of the letter in which it was alleged by the English that the Nawab had given his consent to attack the French, every preparation was made for the expedition. Hill writes that the request made by Shiraj to Clive to join him at Patna

"gave Clive an excuse for starting, and accordingly he joined his troops on the 3rd March. On the 7th he wrote that he would assist the Nawab with pleasure : that it was dangerous to leave such enemies as the French in his rear ; accordingly, it would be better to dispose of them first, and that he would wait at Chandernagore for instructions."§

But when the English received the letter from Shiraj alleging to give his consent to them to attacking the French, the English did not let the grass grow under their feet, but made ready every preparation to attack the French. They also received about this time reinforcements from Bombay.

"About this time the British, whose weakness had been the original cause of their entering upon negotiations with the French, had been reinforced by troops from Bombay."**

When the "heaven-born" "General" Clive commenced his march on

* *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 191.

† "Partly by such arguments, and, taught by the French the power of money at the subah's court, partly by a handsome present of money to his first secretary, he (Mr. Watts) produced the following letter from him to Mr. Watson. *"Reflections,"* p. 70.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CLXIII.

** *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp, CLXIII and CLXIV.

Chandernagar, the French were alarmed and demanded an explanation of his approach to their town. With that consummate hypocrisy and the art of lying of which Clive was a perfect master, he replied to them on the 9th March:

"I have no intention of acting offensively against your nation at present; whenever I have, you may be assured I shall frankly acquaint you with it."

It was necessary for the English to invent some pretext for the declaration of hostilities against the French. So with the ingenuity of the wolf in the fable, a pretext was invented. They were charged with entertaining deserters from the British. Clive wrote to that effect to the French on the 11th March. On the following morning, he encamped two miles westward of Chandernagar. Admiral Watson also arrived at Chandernagar by this time. On the 13th the French governor of Chandernagar was asked by the British to surrender. As the French did not do so, Clive on the 14th read the Declaration of War to his troops, and commenced the siege of Chandernagar, which he captured on the 23rd March.

Thus fell Chandernagar and with its fall departed the power and glory of the French from Bengal. The ease and rapidity with which Chandernagar was captured are to be explained by the treachery of at least one French officer and also of the servants in the employ of the Nawab. One French officer, named Lieutenant de Terraneau, betrayed to the English the passage of the river. According to Blochmann,

"M. Terraneau, who in consequence of this treachery became infamous and 'black-faced,' received from the English a large sum as a reward for his ingratitude. He sent a part of the money home to his old and infirm father, who however returned it, when he heard the disgraceful behaviour of his son. M. Terraneau felt much mortified at this. Shame 'seized the hem of his garment,' he shut himself up; after a few days his body was found hanging at the gate of his house, suspended by means of a towel. It was plain that he had committed suicide." (Notes on Siraj-ud-daula, *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, 1867).

Nand Kumar had been ordered to proceed to Hugli to prevent the English attacking the French. He had a large force under him. But he was bought over to the cause of the English. Amir Chand was the agent chosen by the English to do all the dirty work of occidental diplomacy and to corrupt the Nawab's officers by temptations and specious and smooth promises. According to Scrafton, the English succeeded in counteracting the influence of the Nawab by "another well-applied bribe to Nand Kumar."

Thornton (History of British India, Vol. i, p, 221) wrote :

"A body of the Subadar's troops was stationed within the bounds of Chandernagore previously to the attack. They belonged to the garrison of Hoogly, and were under the command of Nuncomar, governor of that place. Nuncomar had been bought by Omichand for the English, and on their approach, the troops of Shirajodwola were withdrawn from Chandernagore."

It is more than probable that without the treachery of Nandakumar, the English would not have succeeded in capturing Chandernagar. At a Select Committee, held 10th April, 1757 it was recorded:

"We the servants of the East India Company should always be grateful to that noble-minded and wealthy native merchant of Calcutta—Omichand. It was through his agency that we succeeded

to secure the assistance and co-operation of Dewan Nuncoomar, Phoujdar of Hoogly. A body of Subadar's troops was stationed within the bounds of Chandernuggor previously to our attack of that place. These troops belonged to the garrison of Hoogly, and were under the command of Dewan Nuncomar. *If these troops were not withdrawn, it would have been highly improbable to gain the victory".*

The conduct of Amir Chand, it is very difficult to understand. He had been very badly treated by the English and yet he was ready and willing to do any dirty work for them. But he had yet to learn how "grateful" his Christian friends were to him for all the important services he had rendered to them.

"The capture of Chandernagore was of immense importance to the British. It broke the power of the French in Bengal, and left the way clear for a final settlement with the Nawab. The marine and military stores supplied Calcutta with everything that had been destroyed when that place was lost. Finally, it deprived Pondicherry and the French islands of both provisions and trade."*

THE CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE NAWAB

The capture of Chandernagar greatly enraged as well as alarmed Shiraj-ud-daula. Had the merchants of the other Christian nation, that is, the Dutch, been wise in their generation, they would have made common cause with the French and have fought against the British. But this they did not do and so they also not long afterwards shared the same fate as the French.

The terms of the Treaty concluded on the 9th February were not broken by Shiraj but by the English. He had asked them the loan of their troops. But when the troops had already started--not to join him but to fight the French, he wrote to them that he did not any longer require their services. On his own part, the Nawab had very scrupulously fulfilled the articles of the treaty he had entered upon with the English. But the latter on their expedition to Chandernagar, passing through the territory of the Nawab, committed wanton outrages on his subjects. Of course, the Nawab never gave them permission of the passage through his dominions. So their passing through his country was a gross breach of all the established laws of nations. Shiraj in a letter dated the 1st of *Rajub*, or 22nd of March 1757, wrote to Admiral Watson:

"What I have promised and set my hand to, I will firmly maintain, nor in any respect deviate therefrom. All *Mr. Watts's* demands, and whatever he has represented to me, I have complied with, and what remains, shall be given up by the 15th of this Moon. This, *Mr. Watts* must have written to you, with all the particulars, but notwithstanding all this, it appears to me from many instances, that you seek to obliterate your agreement with me. The country within the territories of *Houghly, Ingely, Burdwan* and *Nuddea*, have been ravaged by your troops. For what cause is this ? Add to this, that *Govendram Metre* wrote to *Nundcomar* by the son of *Ramden Gose*, requiring him to deliver *Colligaut*, as belonging to the districts of *Calcutta*, into his the said *Metre's* possession. What is the meaning of this ? I am sure this has been done without your knowledge. In confidence of your engagement, I made peace, with the view of procuring the welfare of the country, and to prevent the ruinous consequences which would befal the royal territories from both armies, and not that the people should be trampled upon, and the revenues obstructed.

* S. C. Hill's *Bengal Records*, Vol. I, p. CLXXIV.

"Your endeavours should be daily to strengthen more and more the friendship which has taken root betwixt us, and to that end put a stop to the influence of this mischief-maker, and discountenance the aforessid *Metre* in such manner, that he may not dare to say these things, nor be guilty of such false proceedings for the future. By the will of God, the agreement shall never be infringed upon my part. I have spoken to Mr. Watts fully on this subject, the particulars of which you will have in his letter.

"P. S. I have just learned that the *French* are bringing a large force from the *Deccan*, to make war against you; for this reason I write to you, that if you stand in need of any force of the government for your support, you will immediately acquaint me, and they shall be ready to join you whenever you shall have occasion for them,"

Shiraj-ud-daula, in the oriental simplicity of his heart and desirous of maintaining peace, wrote the above letter. But alas! he had not sufficient experience of the perfidious character of the foreigners he had to deal with. The English with whom he had to deal were not sincere and honest. That very Mr. Watson on whom he depended, was cutting the ground, as it were, under his feet and digging his grave. Mr. Watts with occidental diplomacy was trying his best to ruin him. So was also Admiral Watson.

After the capture of Chandernagar some of the fugitive French were sheltered by Shiraj-ud-daula. The English demanded their surrender. To the oriental sense of honour such a proposal is always shocking. Shiraj could not hand over to the English those who had asked his protection.

Before the surrender of Chandernagar, among the articles of capitulation proposed by the Director and Council for the French East India Company's affairs at Chandernagar, to Vice-Admiral Watson, was the following :

"The factories of *Cossimbazar, Dacca, Patna, Feuda,* and of *Balasore,* shall remain at the command of the chiefs who direct them."

Watson's answer to this proposal was :

"To be settled between the Nawab and the admiral."

So the English asked the Nawab to surrender all these French factories to them. Clive wrote to him on 29th March, 1757 :

"Watts now began to press upon the Nawab a new demand from the British—*viz.*,

"Your Excellency should deliver up to us the persons and effects of the French at Cossimbazar, and their other out-settlements, as being our enemies. We shall then be without rivals,........".

Of course, this was a new demand on the Nawab. The English were trying to press upon him such new demands as it was not possible for him, consistently with his sense of honour, to comply with. They knew as much. But then they wanted some pretext for a quarrel with him. As said before, Shiraj had very faithfully executed almost all the articles of the original Treaty of 9th February. This was admitted even by Clive, who in his letter to Select Committee, Fort Saint George, dated Camp near Chandernagar, 30th March, 1757, wrote :

"He (Siraj-ud-daula) has fulfilled most of the Articles of the treaty made with us. The three lack of rupees are already paid and goods and money to a considerable amount delivered up to us at our several subordinates, and I make little doubt but that all his engagements will be duly executed."*

* *Bengal Records,* vol. II, p. 308.

The Moslem Prince was disgusted with the conduct and behaviour of the perfidious English. Even the editor of the *Bengal Records,* S. C. Hill, himself an Englishman and presumably a Christian, is obliged to write :

"Watts now began to press upon the Nawab a new demand from the British—*viz.,* that the French Factories should be surrendered. The Admiral wrote several letters on the subject, but could obtain no satisfactory reply, and after his letter of the 19th April, which was couched in threatening terms, he dropped the correspondence. In fact the Admiral, though willing enough to fight the French, whom he considered the natural enemies of Britain, and to attack them so long as they remained capable of resistance, thought that to make their affairs the pretext of obtaining further concessions from the Nawab, with whom the British had so recently concluded a peace, was hardly consistent with his honour. *But those were days in which even the most honourable men were convinced of the necessity of trickery and chicanery in politics, and were therefore accustomed to give their tacit consent to actions which they would not commit themselves.'"*

Admiral Watson was no exception to the generality of the British in India. But if we are to judge Shiraj-ud-daula by the standard of the British of those days, we shall find him to be an angel compared to Watson, Clive and Co. Poor fellow, his great fault was that he wanted to be true to himself and also to those English Christians who possessed no conscience and were strangers to honesty and veracity.

Of course, the Nawab did not agree to deliver up the French factories into the hands of the English. In his letter to Clive, dated 4 April 1757, he wrote

"that the French, by the permission and *phirmaund* of the King, have built them several Factories and carried on their trade in this Kingdom. I cannot, therefore, without hurting my character and exposing myself to trouble hereafter, deliver up their factories and goods unless I have a written order from them for so doing, and I am persuaded that from your friendship for me you would never be glad at any thing whereby my fame would suffer, as I, for my own part, am ever desirous of promoting [your good]. M. Renault, the French Governor, being in your power, if you could get from him a paper under his own hand and seal to this purpose, 'That of his own will and pleasure he thereby gave up to the English company's servants, and empowered them to receive, all the Factories, money, and goods belonging to the French company without any hindrance from the Nabob's people,' and would send this to me, I should be secure by that from any trouble hereafter on this account. But it is absolutely necessary you come to some agreement about the King's duties arising from the French trade : for this reason that there may be no loss to the King. I shall then be able to answer to his servants, 'That in order to make good the duties accruing from the French trade, I had delivered up their Factories into the hands of the English."

Clive could not of course put pressure upon M. Renault, who was his prisoner. He wrote to Shiraj-ud-daula on the 8th April :

"Notwithstanding we have reduced the French so low, you, contrary to your own interest and to the treaty you have made with us that my enemies should be yours, you still support and encourage them. Bul should you think it would hurt your character to deliver up the French Factories and goods, your Excellency has only to signify to me your approbation and I will march up and take them."

Shiraj could not agree to such a proposal. Clive wrote to him on the 10th April complaining that some of the articles of the Treaty of the 9th February had not been executed by the Nawab. The simple-minded Asiatic Shiraj, not thoroughly acquainted

Ibid., vol. I, p. CLXXVI.

with the scheming and designing character of the English, was therefore no match for them in their "trickery and chicanery" in politics. Disgusted with their conduct, on the 14th of April, he wrote boldly and plainly to Watson :

"I have written before, and now repeat, that if the *English* Company want to establish their trade, do not write me what is not conformable to our agreement, by the instigation of self-interested and designing men, who want to break the peace between us. If you are not disposed to come to a rupture with me, you have my agreement under my hand and seal ; when you write, look upon that, and write accordingly. . . . .

"If you desire to maintain the peace, write nothing contrary to the treaty." (Ive's Voyages, p. 142).

The chief of the French Factory of Kasimbazar, M. Jean Law, was at Murshidabad. The Nawab knowing that the French were the cause of all his troubles with the English and not desiring a rupture with the latter, at one time thought of delivering over M. Jean Law and all other Frenchmen into the hands of the English. Writes S. C. Hill :

"At last, on the 13th April, he (M. Jean Law) was summoned to a final interview with the Nawab and Mr. Watts. The latter begged him to surrender to the British, offering him the most honorable terms, whilst the Nawab told him that the Franch were the cause of all the troubles between him and the British and that he did not wish to embroil the country in war for the sake of a nation which had refused him assistance when he had asked for it. It seems as if the Nawab had intended to arrest Law at this interview and hand him over to the British ; but the timely arrival of a guard of French grenadiers made this impossible without a sanguinary struggle, ..."*

So Shiraj-ud-daula was quite honest when on the 14th April 1757, he wrote to Watson :

"For your satisfaction, and in observance of the agreement between us, to look upon each other's enemies as our own, I have expelled M. Law with all his adherents from my country, and have given strict orders to all my *Naibs* and *Fougedars* not to permit them to remain in any part of my dominions. I am ready upon all occasions to grant you my assistance. If the *French* ever enter the province with a great or small force, with a design of making war upon you ; *God* and his *prophets* are between us, that whenever you write to me, I will be your ally, and join you with all my force. Rest satisfied in this point, and be assured of my resolution to remain inviolably by the promises which I have made in my letters, and in the treaty concluded betwixt us. With regard to the *French* factories and merchandize, I must acquaint your excellency, that I have been informed, the *French* Company are indebted to the natives, and have several *lacks* belonging to my subjects in their hands : should I comply with your demands in delivering up the effects, how can I answer it to the creditors of the *French* ?" (Ive's Voyages, p. 142).

Shiraj might have changed his mind afterwards, but there can be no doubt that he was quite sincere in his intentions when he wrote the above letter to Watson. But the real misehief-maker who was exciting Watson and Clive against the Nawab was the British Resident at his Court, Mr. Watts. When the Nawab came to know about it and the letter to him of Admiral Watson dated 19th April 1757 left no doubt in his mind of Watts being a mischief-maker, he was much enraged with his conduct. So

"On the 20th April the Nawab turned the British Agent out of the Darbar, and on the 21st presented him with a dress of honour."†

* *Bengal Records*, Vol. I, p. CLXXVIII.

† Hill, Vol. I, p. CLXXX.

M. Law was made to leave Murshidabad on the 16th April, and proceeded towards Behar. Stewart, in his History of Bengal, writes :

"Mr. Law, who appears to have been well acquainted with the politics of Moorsheedabad, told the Nawab, that most of his chiefs were dissatisfied with him, that they were leaguing with the English against him, and that, on the departure of the French, the smothered flame would burst forth and destroy him. Siraj-ud-dowla felt the truth of his observation, but had not resolution to detain him ; he however promised to send for him, should anything occur ; but Mr. Law prophetically said, 'I know we shall never meet again.'

The information given to Shiraj by Law must have been an additional motive with the Nawab for ill-treating the British agent in the manner described above.

The British were intriguing and conspiring against the Nawab, whom they were bent upon dethroning and thus effecting a revolution in Bengal. From the very day Watts arrived at Murshidabad he commenced his campaign of conspiracy against Shiraj. It is not on record that he personally approached any of the courtiers of the Moslem prince. But he used as his tool the Panjabi merchant, named Amir Chand. To this man was entrusted all the dirty work of occidental diplomacy, and he succeeded so well that within about two months of the ratification of the Treaty the conspiracy against Shiraj was very well advanced. Scrafton, who had gone to Murshidabad in connection with the Kasimbazar factory, wrote to Walsh, on 20th April, 1757:—

"Young minds cannot keep resentment long concealed ; his heart broke out to-day. When our *vacqueel* went to him, the instant he saw him he ordered him to be turned out of the Durbar ; as the fellow was going he overheard him say, 'I will destroy them and their nation.' Meer Jaffer was ordered to march and he would follow himself ; when asked the reason, he said : 'they are always writing me to deliver up the French ; I will receive no more of their letters.' *But for God's sake let us pacify him for the present ; things are not ripe........Give me but power and I dare swear that in ten days I could settle that you shall be joined by a large force as soon as you have marched two days north."* *

By smooth and specious promises and also by other means which can be very easily guessed, the English succeeded in seducing the courtiers of Shiraj. Writes Hill :

"The British Agent, having the deeper purse, was able to influence not only the leading men at Court, but also the Secretaries, and was much assisted by the foresighted cunning of Omichand. . . . Omichand had won over Nand Kumar, the *Faujdar* of Hugli . . ." †

The principal conspirators whom the British had raised through the instrumentality of Amir Chand, were the Jain bankers known as the Seths, Mir Jafar, Manik Chand, Raj Ballav, and Durlabh Ram. They had their own selfish motives and interests to serve by conspiring against the Nawab. The Seths proposed Yar Lutf Khan to the throne. This man was of low origin, and, although he was in the service of the Nawab, being a Commander of 2,000 troops, he was in the pay of the Seths, for he afforded them protection. But the English did not encourage the nomination of Yar Lutf Khan.

The other aspirant for the throne of Bengal was Mir Jafar. He was more influential than Yar Lutf and was also related to Shiraj. Mr. Watts wrote to Calcutta on the 26th April, 1757, that Mir Jafar had informed him through one Armenian

* *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 349.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. CLXXVII.

Coja Petrus that he, together with others, was ready to assist the British in overthrowing the Nawab. Mr. Watts wrote:

"If you approve of this scheme, which is more feasible than the other I wrote about, he (Mir Jafar) requests you will write your proposals of what money, what land you want, or what treaties you will engage in."

At the same time the English, not to rouse the suspicions of the Nawab, tried their best to show him that they were his friends! Wrote Macaulay:

"He (Clive) wrote to Siraj-ud-dowla in terms so affectionate that they for a time lulled that weak prince into perfect security. The same courier who carried this 'soothing letter,' as Clive calls it, carried to Mr. Watts a letter in the following terms: 'Tell Meer Jaffer to fear nothing. I will join him with five thousand men who never turned their backs. Assure him, I will march night and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left'."

It is not necessary to describe in detail all the means which the English adopted to lull the suspicions of the Moslem Prince. Shiraj was a simple-minded oriental youth, and so he failed to understand the schemes and designs of the occidental traders.

Amir Chand had been of the greatest possible use to the English. Without his assistance they could not have captured Chandernagar. This was admitted by Clive and others at a Select Committee, held 10th April, 1757, when they wrote:—

"We the servants of the East India Company should always be grateful to that noble-minded and wealthy native merchant of Calcutta—Omichand."

Again, it was he who was instrumental in making their conspiracy a success and getting Shiraj dethroned. If the English were a nation of shop-keepers, Amir Chand also belonged to that category. He did all the dirty work of occidental diplomacy, and now he thought that the time had arrived when he ought to be handsomely rewarded for all his troubles and the services rendered to the foreigners. Amir Chand was false to himself, false to his Sovereign and nation, but true to the Christians whom he had very faithfully served. It is said that there is honour among thieves. But these foreign thieves, represented by Clive, Watson and Co., lacked in all sense of honour and honesty. They were ungrateful wretches who did not scruple to deceive Amir Chand by the foulest means that ever disgraced the annals of the human race. Amir Chand knew that, after dethroning or murdering Shiraj, they would plunder the royal treasury, and so he insisted on demanding for himself 5 per cent. on all the royal treasure and also a share in the booty in gems and pearls. Of course, these ungrateful persons made use of Amir Chand as a tool to serve their purpose, but would not listen to his demands. So they decided to cheat him, and the Christian Clive, who is called 'the Heaven-born general' and looked upon as the founder of the supremacy of England in India, deceived the heathen Amir Chand by forgery. These foreigners were in the hands of Amir Chand, and it would have been dangerous to have told him that they could not comply with his demands. Accordingly, Clive wrote to Watts:

"Flatter Omy Chand greatly, tell him the Admiral, Committee, and self are infinitely obliged to him for the pains he has taken to aggrandize the Company's affairs, and that his name will be greater in England than ever it was in India. If this can be brought to bear, to give him no room for suspicion we take off 10 *lack* from the 30 demanded for himself, and add 5 *per cent*, upon the whole sum received, which will turn out the same thing."

Mr. Watts concluding the Treaty with Mir Jafar and his son Miran.
From a painting attributed to Zoffany in the possession of E. H. Watts, Esq.

When arraigned before the Parliamentary Committee, Clive was not ashamed to inform the honorable members that

"When Mr. Watts had nearly accomplished the means of carrying that Revolution into execution, he acquainted him by letter that a fresh difficulty had started; that Omichand had insisted upon 5 *per cent* on all the Nawab's treasures, and thirty *lack* in money, and threatened if he did not comply with that demand he would immediately acquaint Serajah Dowlah with what was going on, and Mr. Watts should be put to death. That when he received this advice he thought art and policy warrantable in defeating the purposes of such a villain, and that his Lordship himself formed that plan of the fictitious treaty to which the Committee consented... That his Lordship never made any secret of it; he thinks it warrantable in such a case, and would do it again a hundred times."

Those "honorable" members were not scandalised at the conduct of their heaven-born general, for had they been, they would have ordered his immediate execution by hanging, for in those days, according to the laws of England, forgery was punished with death. But those "honorable" members must have considered cheating a "heathen" by means of forgery very good fun, and so Clive was rewarded with a peerage. For committing an ignoble deed, he was raised to the nobility!

It was proposed by Clive and his Christian colleagues to draw up two treaties,* one containing an Article granting Amir Chând the sum he demanded, and another treaty from which it should be excluded. Admiral Watson declined to be a party to deceiving Amir Chand and so refused to sign the fictitious treaty. But by Clive's order a man named Lushington forged Watson's signature on the false treaty—upon red paper—and this was shown to Amir Chand.†

The original treaty made between the English and the Moslem traitor, Mir Jafar, consisted of 13 articles, but the fictitious one of 14. It bound Mir Jafar to confirm all the grants and privileges allowed by Shiraj to the English, and he had to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with them. All Frenchmen and their factories

* Mill (iii. 171) rightly observes: "Clive, whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang, proposed that two treaties with Mir Jaffier should be drawn up and signed."

† The following is an account of the famous Omichand incident in the words used by Clive himself in the House of Commons: "The treachery and perfidy of Siraj-ud-Daulah was never at rest. A French army was expected which might have proved fatal to us. Omichand insisted upon thirty lacs of rupees and 5 per cent upon all the treasure that was found. I did not hesitate to discover out a stratagem, for the lives of the English people at Cossimbazar would have been lost if Omichand had informed the Nawab. The Treaty was signed by every one except Watson, and I should have considered myself sufficiently authorised to have put his name to it by the conversation I had with him. As to the person who signed Admiral Watson's name to the treaty, whether he did it in his presence or not I cannot say, but this I know that he thought he had sufficient authority for so doing, as the existence of the Company was at stake, as also were the lives of the people in the English settlement at Cossimbazar, and I hold it was a matter of policy and justice to deceive so great a villain." In his own evidence before the Committee, Clive said:— "I should not have declared that Watson had consented to have his name put to the fictitious treaty, if I had not understood it from Lushington. But I would have commanded his name to be put whether the Admiral consented or not. I thought art and policy warrantable in defeating such a villain as Omichand, the Council assented to it."

were to be delivered up to the British and they were not to be permitted to resettle in Bengal. The Company was to receive one crore of Rupees for the loss sustained by the destruction of Calcutta and for the expenses of the war. The British inhabitants were to receive 50, the Hindus 20, and the Armenians 7 *lacks* of Rupees for their losses at the capture of Calcutta. The Company was to be put in possession of all the land within the Calcutta Ditch and 600 yards all round; and also to receive the *Zamindari* of the country south of Calcutta between the River and the Salt Lakes as far as Calpee. The Nawab was to pay British troops when required for his defence. He was not to erect fortifications on the river below Hughli. He should comply with these articles within 30 days of his being acknowledged Nawab. The Company would assist him against his enemies as long as he would comply with the Treaty.

THE BATTLE OF PLASSEY.

The Select Committee at Calcutta had placed the management of their affairs in the hands of Clive and Watts. How Clive managed their affairs satisfactorily by forgery has already been mentioned. But Watts, who was playing the part of an occidental diplomatist to perfection, was a coward. To conclude the treaty with Mir Jafar he did not dare go openly to that Moslem traitor's palace. But late at night of the 4th June 1757, he was taken by an Armenian, Coja Petrus, in a *dooley*, which is used only by women and therefore 'inviolable, to see Mir Jafar, who signed the Treaty.

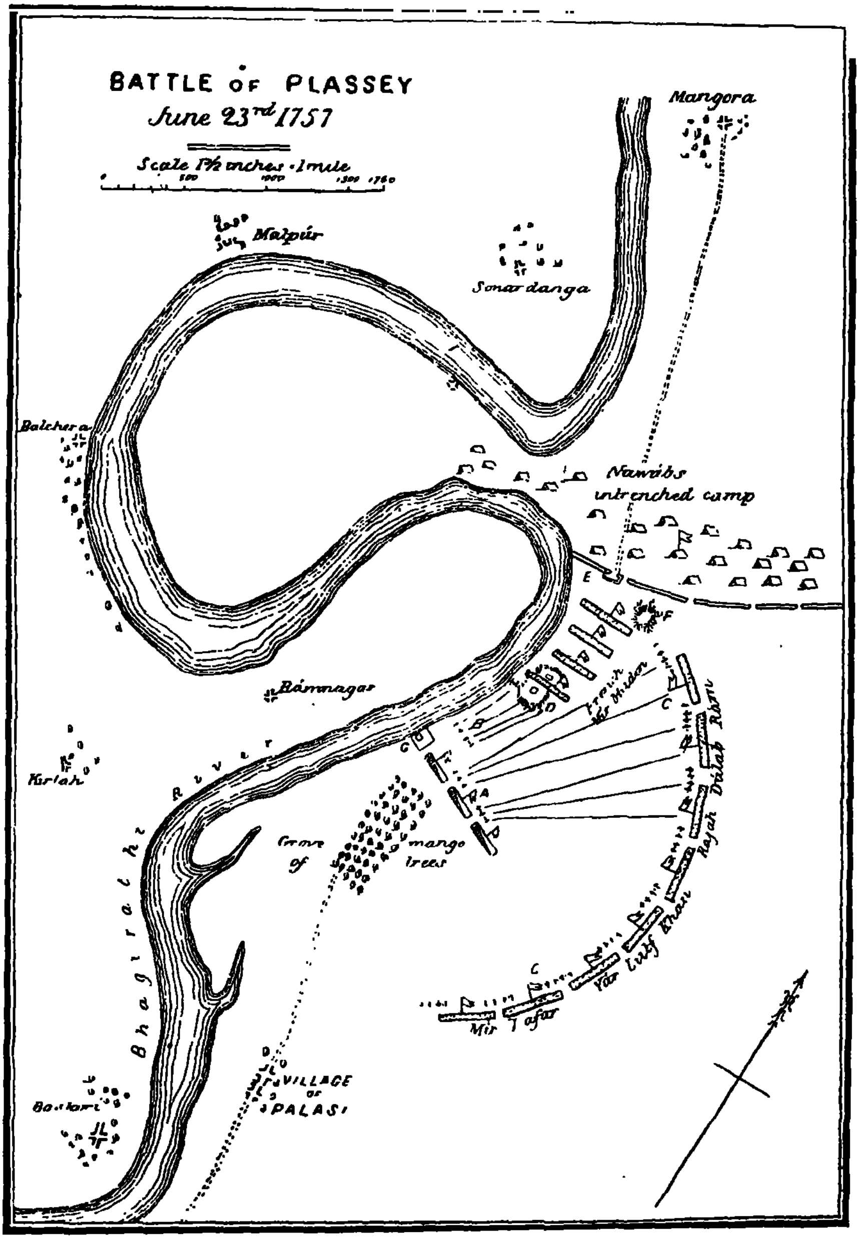
Shiraj, it has already been said, was deceived by the British, and lulled into security. He was thrown off his guard and so had dismissed half his army. The time was arriving, however, when the English thought it was no longer necessary to keep on the cloak of friendship meant to deceive the Nawab. But Watts and some other Britishers were still at Murshidabad, and as long as they were there it would not do to inform the Nawab of their treacherous intentions. On the evening of the 12th June these men, on the pretext of a little hunting, obtained the Nawab's permission to leave Murshidabad. The next day the Nawab, fully grasping the situation by the flight of Watts and other Englishmen, was no longer left in doubt as to their treachery. So on that day, he wrote the following letter to Watson as well as to Clive :

"According to my promises, and the agreement made between us, I have duly rendered everything to Mr. *Watts* except a very small remainder, and had almost settled *Manick Chand's* affair. Notwithstanding all this, Mr. *Watts* and the rest of the Council of the factory at *Cossimbazar*, under pretence of going to take the air in their gardens, fled away in the night. This is an evident mark of deceit, and of an intention to break the treaty. I am convinced it could not have happened without your knowledge, nor without your advice. I all along expected something of this kind, and for that reason I would not recall my forces from *Plassey*, expecting some treachery.

"I praise God, that the breach of the treaty has not been on my part : God and his *Prophet* have been witness to the contract made between us, and whoever first deviates from it will bring upon themselves the punishment due to their actions"*.

Poor Shiraj did not know the nature and extent of the conspiracy that had been concocted against him. He, as an honest and inexperienced youth, relied for support on

* Ives, *Voyages*, p. 145.



Battle of Plassey
From Broome's 'History of the Bengal Army'

that very arch-conspirator whom the English were making the tool to serve their purpose. Ali Vardi Khan used to make his officers swear on the Koran to be faithful to him whenever he saw any trace of mutinous spirit among them. He tried the same expedient and went to see Mir Jafar, begged him to agree to a reconciliation and accepted his promise solemnly made on the Koran to be true to him.

But it was the perfidious Mir Jafar who advised Clive to march on to Plassey when everything was ready. Ives writes :

"On the 12th of *June*, advice was received from *Meer Jaffar* and the other confederates, that all things were in readiness with them. The die was cast ; and on the 13th of *June*, the whole army marched forwards,......"*

That very day, that is, on the 13th June, Clive wrote to Shiraj a letter charging him with not executing the articles of the Treaty and telling him that

"he had determined, with the approbation of all who were charged with the Company's affairs, to proceed immediately to *Cossimbazar*, and submit their disputes to the arbitration of *Meer Jaffier*. *Roydullub*, *Jugget-Seet*, and others of his great men ; that if it should be found, that he, the Colonel, had deviated from the treaty, he then swore to give up all farther claims ; but that, if it appeared his excellency had broken it, he should then demand satisfaction for all the losses sustained by the *English*, and all the charges of their army and navy, and concluded with telling him, 'that the rains being so near, and it requiring many days to receive an answer, he had found it necessary to wait upon him immediately.'"†

It is not necessary to describe in detail the march of the troops under Clive to Plassey. Plassey, which is twenty miles away from Murshidabad, was so named because it contained groves of *palas* (*Butea frondosa*).§ Shiraj, as mentioned in his letter of 12th June 1757 to Watson, had stationed an army at Plassey expecting the treachery of the foreigners. Here on the 23rd June a battle was fought which certainly did not reflect any credit on the arms of the English, least of all on Clive. Writes his friend and patron, the historian Orme:

* *Ibid.*, p. 148.

† *Ibid.*, p. 149.

§ The following account of Plassey is taken from H. Beveridge's interesting article, contributed to the *Calcutta Review* for April 1892 (p. 342) :

"Plassey (Palasi) is now in the district of Nadiya,,.... It formerly belonged to the Murshidabad district, and perhaps ought to belong to it still, for it is ten miles nearer Berhampore than it is to Krishnagur. It is part of what used to be called Kashimbazar island, and Ramnagar Factory and other places opposite it, or south-west of it, are still in Murshidabad, though on the other side of the River. Apparently the name Plassey comes from the *palas* tree (*Butea frondosa)*, but there are no *palas* trees in the village, and perhaps there never were any. Plassey is the name of the pargana, a tract of country 240 miles square, as well as of the village, so the eponymous trees may have been elsewhere.

"Plassey is a large village, containing some 250 houses and several thousand acres......The grove of Plassey has entirely disappeared. In 1802 Lord Valentia changed bearers here. He speaks of the magnificent tope ; but the last tree died in 1879. The stumps and roots are said to have been dug up and sent to England ; and the natives have a story that the *Sahib* who did this, died immediately afterwards. The grove, the Palasi Bagh of native writers, was an orchard composed of mango and other fruit trees."

"Some say he was asleep; which is not improbable, considering how little rest he had for so many hours before; but this is no imputation either against his courage or conduct".*

Shiraj's army was demoralized and corrupted by the English. There were traitors in his camp, the most notorious being Mir Jafar, his commander-in-chief, who had a secret understanding with the British. Taking all these things into consideration, it is not to be wondered at that Shiraj lost the day at Plassey. The verdict of Colonel Malleson on that battle is so just and appropriate, that it is given below.

"It was only when treason had done her work, when treason had driven the Nuab from the field, when treason had removed his army from its commanding position, that Clive was able to advance without the certainty of being annihilated. Plassey, then, though a decisive, can never be considered a great battle."†

Clive also in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee said:

"The battle being attended with so little bloodshed, arose from two causes; first,—the army was sheltered by so high a bank that the heavy artillery of the enemy could not possibly make them much mischief. The other was,—that Suraja Doula had not confidence in his army, nor his army any confidence in him, and therefore, they did not do their duty."

Clive should have told the members of the Parliamentary Committee what he had done to demoralize and corrupt the Nawab's army.

Fate was against Shiraj. The death of his faithful general Mir Madan made him lose all hope of a victory at Plassey. Mr. H. Beveridge says:

"The real Musalman hero of Plassey was Mir Madan,........ He was killed by a cannon ball, while endeavouring to carry the grove....... Mir Madan's fate resembles that of Talmash in 1694. Both were the victims of treachery and both were killed by a cannon ball in the thigh.......

"It is interesting to find that the villagers of Plassey knew something about the battle. They spoke of the treachery of Mir Jaffar and the heroism of Mir Madan, and one man was enthusiastic enough to say that Mir Madan's fame would last as long as the world." §

The day was lost and Shiraj on the evening of the fatal 23rd June, which was a Thursday, left the battle field of Plassey and, riding on an elephant, made haste to reach his capital, where he arrived early next morning. The news of the disaster at Plassey spread like wild fire all over the country. Shiraj, to retrieve the disaster,

* Professor J. Holland Rose, of Cambridge University, in his article on "The influence of sea power in Indian History (1746-1802)" in Vol. III, pp. 188-204, of the *Journal of Indian History*, writes.

"Rightly considered, then, the Plassey campaign is an example of a conjoint operation of fleet and army conducted under advantageous conditions.......The whole campaign would have been criminally rash had not Watson's fleet provided both formidable powers of attack and means of retreat if necessary." (pp. 194-195).

In a footnote (p. 195), he writes:

"It is singular that Mahan (*Influence of Sea Power on History*, pp. 292, 305) scarcely refers to Watson's squadron in deciding the campaign in Bengal."

In that article he has "striven to show that from 1746-1799 the decisive issue in the struggle for the supremacy in India was that of supremacy at sea." (p. 203).

† *Decisive Battles of India*, p. 73.

§ *The Calcutta Review* for April 1892, p. 343.

tried again to collect troops. The sun of Shiraj's fortune had set, and, as no one worships the setting sun, so hardly any one came to the rescue of that Mohammedan prince. Even his father-in-law deserted him. Writers a Christian historian :

"Even his wife's father, Mahammed Eeruch Khan, though the Nawab begged him to stay and collect troops, either to defend him where he was, or to accompany him in his retreat, refused and hastened to his own house at the city of Moorshidabad."*

Shiraj-ud-daula's treasury was full, aye over-flowing. He tried now with his money to raise and collect troops, but in this also he failed. Writes the same Christian author who has been already quoted above:

"As a last resource, the Nabob opened the doors of his treasury, and distributed large sums to the soldiers; who received his bounty and deserted him with it to their homes."†

Before the Parliamentary Commitee of 1772 on Indian affairs, Clive in his evidence said that

"When Surajadaula arrived at the city, his palace was full of treasure; but with all that treasure he could not purchase the confidence of his army; he was employed in lavishing considerable sums among his troops to engage them to another battle, but to no purpose."

He was advised by some of his courtiers to surrender himself to the British. It is needless to say that he treated this advice with that contempt which it very richly deserved.

Poor Shiraj ! he left Murshidabad, for Mir Jafar was approaching it. He took the road leading to Bhagvangola, disguised as a fakir.§

Let us now turn to Clive and Mir Jafar, whom we left at Plassey. The heaven-born general did not stay at Plassey after the battle, for he was afraid lest his troops should disperse to plunder. Clive marched on to Dadpur, which he reached by 8 p. m. Here he halted for the night. And it was here that, on the morning of the 24th June, Mir Jafar presented himself before him.

On the evening of the 23rd Clive had sent Messrs. Watts and Scrafton to wait on Mir Jafar and again next morning, he sent Omar Beg, with whom, accompanied by his son, Miran, Mir Jafar appeared in Clive's camp. 'Tis conscience which makes cowards of us all, and that traitor was afraid to appear before Clive lest he would arrest him. So when on his approach to Clive's camp, the guard turned out

"to receive him as he passed, he started as if he thought it was all over with him; nor did his countenance brighten up till the Colonel embraced him, and saluted him *Subah* of the three provinces."**

* Scott's *History of Bengal*, p. 369.

† *Ibid.*, p. 369.

§ Clive in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee said :

"About twelve at night the fatal news was brought him of Meer Jaffer's arrival at the city, closely followed by the English army. He then in despair gave up all for lost, and made his escape out of one of the palace windows with only two or three attendants,..."

** Scrafton's *Reflections*, p. 90.

Clive

"assured Meer Jaffer that the English would most religiously perform their treaty, and advised him to pursue Serajah Dowla without delay, and he would follow with the English Army."*

At the same time Mir Jafar informed Clive that he was determined to carry out the terms of the Treaty he had concluded with the English.

Mir Jafar marched and reached Murshidabad early on the morning of the 25th. Clive also followed him and arrived on the 26th and encamped at the French Factory at Saidabad, but did not enter Murshidabad till the 29th instant. According to Clive,

"The city of Muxadavad is as extensive, populous, and rich, as the city of London ; with this difference that there are individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than any of the last city."

Mahomedan rule, according to the estimate of European writers, was a blight and a curse to the people of India and the Mahomedan rulers were tyrants. If these allegations were true, how do these writers account for the prosperity of the people living under Mahomedan rulers ?

In his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee, Clive is reported to have said

"That the English army having encamped within about six miles of Muxadavad, his Lordship sent Messrs. Watts and Walsh to congratulate Meer Jaffer upon his success, and to know the time when he should enter the city ; in consequence of which, the day was fixed upon, and he entered the City at the head of 200 Europeans and 500 *sepoys*. That the inhabitants, who were spectators upon that occasion, must have amounted to some hundred thousands ; and if they had an inclination to have destroyed the Europeans, they might have done it with sticks and stones."

It would be idle to speculate what the course of Indian history would have been, if the inhabitants of Murshidabad had done so.

Mir Jafar was a creature of the British. So he hesitated—rather, at first declined, to take his seat on the *masnad* in their presence. In his letter to the Select Committee, Fort William, dated Muxadavad, 30th June, 1757, Clive wrote :—

"In the afternoon" (of 29th June) "I waited on Jaffar Ally Cawn, being escorted to him by his son. As I found he declined taking his seat on the *musnad*, I handed him to it ; and saluted him as Nawab, upon which his courtiers congratulated him and paid him the usual homage."

It was now time for these foreigners, who had their prototypes in Cortez and Pizarro, to fleece their creature and grow rich at his expense. So, according to Clive's evidence before the Parliamentary Committee,

"A day was then fixed upon to consider the state of the Nabob's treasures and to see how far he would comply with the treaty immediately ; and that after that state was known this matter was left to be decided by the Seats, two men of immense wealth and great influence, and it was agreed that half should be paid down and the other half in three years. That at this meeting was Omichand, and when the real treaty came to be read, the indignation and resentment expressed in that man's countenance bars all description. He said, "This cannot be the treaty ; it was a red treaty that I saw." That his Lordship replied, 'Yes, Omichand, but this is a white treaty'."*

* *First Parliamentary Report*, 1772, p. 155.

† Orme, the friend of Clive, writes in his *History of Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 82 :

"The Conference being ended, Clive and Scrafton went towards Omichand, who was awaiting in full assurance of hearing the glad tidings of his good fortune, when Clive said, 'It is now time to

It did not cost Clive and his compatriots and co-religionists any pang of conscience—supposing they were endowed with that commodity at all, to have cheated Amir Chand, who had all along been so useful to them and had rendered important services without which they could not have succeeded in their nefarious scheme of dethroning Shiraj and effecting the revolution in Bengal.

But the only aim in life of these persons was to amass money. Mammon was their God. They had come out to India to shake the Pagoda tree and grow rich. By the overthrow of Shiraj, every English subaltern became £3,000 the richer.

Clive was considered such a great hero by his compatriots that it is recorded :

"In addition to his statue erected in the India House, a medal was struck commemorating the battle of Plassey, and in honor of Lord Clive. The following is a description of it : "On one side is Lord Clive holding the British flag in one hand, and with the other bestowing the Subahship on Meer Jaffier : a globe, cornucopia, and an antique rudder, are grouped together ; the cornucopia symbolising the riches bestowed on the English for their losses at Calcutta ; the rudder the increase of commerce

undeceive Omichand,' on which Scrafton said to him in the Indostan language, 'Omichand, the red paper is a trick : you are to have nothing.' These words overpowered him like a blast of sulphur ; he sank back fainting, and would have fallen to the ground had not one of his attendants caught him in his arms ; they carried him to his *palankin,* in which they conveyed him to his house, where he remained many hours in stupid melancholy and began to show some signs of insanity. Some days after he visited Colonel Clive, who advised him to make a pilgrimage to some *pagoda,* which he accordingly did soon after to a famous one near Maulda ; he went and returned insane, his mind every day approaching more and more to idiotism, and, contrary to the usual manners of old age in Indostan, still more to the former excellence of his understanding, he delighted in being continually dressed in the richest garments and ornamented with the most costly jewels. In this state of imbecility he died about a year and a half after the shock of his disappointment."

H. Beveridge writes :

"It was in Jagat Sett's house that Omichand was told that the red treaty was a fraud....In August, 1757, we find Clive writing that, as Omichand's intriguing disposition was carrying him too far, he had recommended him to make a visit of devotion to Maldah. This was like the Delhi Emperors' sending troublesome subjects on pilgrimages to Mecca. But Maldah was too near Murshidabad for such a purpose, and there is no famous pagoda there; such as Orme speaks of. Perhaps Maldah is a mistake for Malwah, where the holy Nerbuddah flows ; or its capital Mandu, may be the place meant." (*The Calcutta Review* for April, 1892, page 341).

Had Amir Chand shown signs of insanity afer being informed of the trick the British had played on him, Clive would not have written the following letter, dated 6th August, 1757, to the Court of Directors :—

"Omichund had merited well while acting in concert with Mr. Watts, but I had reason to think his intriguing disposition was carrying him too far in the pursuit of his private interest, therefore recommended to him a visit of devotion to Malda. He is a person capable of rendering you great services while properly restrained, therefore not to be wholly discarded. (Long's Selections, p. 100).

According to the researches of the late Mr. Justice Saradacharan Mitra, who contributed a very interesting article to the Bengali monthly, *Sahitya Samhita* of 1909, Amirchand died on the 5th December, 1758 and that a few days before his death he intended to go on a pilgrimage to Amritsar. He drew up a will and made Hazari Mall the executor. From this will, Mr. Mitra infers that Amir Chand was a *Nanak panthi, i. e.,* a disciple of Guru Nanak.

The above facts disprove the statement of Orme which other European historians and writers have copied, that Amir Chand turned insane after being cheated by Clive.

and commercial privileges, and the globe the territorial acquisitions, the consequences of the victory." The inscription is "a Soubah given to Bengal."

On the reverse of the medal is Victory seated on an elephant, bearing a trophy in one hand, and a palm-branch in the other, with the inscription, "Victory of Plassey," "Clive Commander."*

THE DEATH OF SHIRAJ

Shiraj fled from Murshidabad, with the object, it would seem, of getting the aid of M. Law and the troops under him. That French officer, after leaving Murshidabad in the middle of May, had arrived at Patna on the 3rd June. He was waiting there when on 22nd June he received the news of the flight of Watts and other Englishmen from Murshidabad. Hostilities with that nation being certain, he wrote to Shiraj to wait for him. He also hurried to his assistance as fast as he could, but was delayed by wind and storm. When, however, he learnt of the disaster that had befallen Shiraj-ud-daula at Plassey and that that prince was a fugitive, and to whom it was impossible for him to render any aid, he retraced his steps and went back to Patna.

At Rajmahal Shiraj was detected, captured and sent back to Murshidabad. Clive, in his letter to the Select Committee, Fort William, dated Muxadavad, late at night 30 June, 1757, wrote :

"......I have rceeived a note from the Nabob informing me that Surajah Dowlat is taken and that he has dispatched his son to secure him."

That unhappy prince was brought to Murshidabad on the 2nd of July and Mir Jafar handed him over to his son, Miran, to take care of him. On that very night, Shiraj-ud-daula was murdered in cold blood by one Muhammad Beg, acting, of course, under the orders of the higher authorities. His mangled body was carried on an elephant through the streets of the town.

One Mahommedan historian, the author of *Riyaz-us-salateen*, plainly writes :

"Siraj-ud-Dowla was put to death at the instigation of the English Chiefs and Jagat Seth."

There is little doubt that Clive instigated the assassination of Shiraj. Stewart in a footnote to the last page of his history of Bengal writes :

"In justice to the memory of Colonel Clive, I think it requisite to state, that none of the native Historians impute any participation in the death of Siraj-ud-Dowla to him. It is generally believed that the capture of the Nawab was kept a secret from the Colonel, till after he had suffered."

There is no truth whatever in this statement. Mir Jafar, who, as this writer himself says, "was nicknamed, by one of the wits of the Court, 'Colonel Clive's ass,' and retained the title till his death," did not venture to do anything without the advice of Clive. He had informed Clive of the capture of Shiraj-ud-daula, which news Clive, '*late at night, 30th June 1757,*' transmitted to Calcutta. So to say "that the capture of the Nawab was kept a secret from the Colonel" is not true.†

* P. 262, *Services of the First European Regiment:* London: Smith Elder & Co., 65, Cornhill, 1843.

† Again we find Clive writing to the Select Committee, Fort William and the two Admirals, dated 2nd July, 1757 :

From the extract from *Riyaz-us-Salateen* given above, it will be seen that the people of Murshidabad suspected the complicity of the Europeans in the assassination of Shiraj. And very probably it was Clive who instigated this foul deed.

Our suspicion is confirmed by the conduct and behaviour of Clive towards Mir Jafar and his son after the tragic event of Shiraj's death. In his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee, Clive is reported to have said :

"In regard to the fate of Serajah Dowla, his Lordship said he had been informed, that he fled and took shelter in a *fackier's,*......and that he was brought from thence to the city and immediately put to death by Meeran, Meer Jaffier's son ; it is said without the father's knowledge; that his Lordship knew nothing of it till the next day, when the Nabob made him acquainted with it, and apologized for his conduct by saying that he had raised a mutiny among his troops ; and this was all his Lordship knew of the matter."

Of course, his lordship was a brazenfaced liar. He knew when Shiraj was captured, as is evident from his letter to the Select Committee, Fort Willian, already quoted above. It passes our understanding how he could have been kept ignorant of the fact when Shiraj was brought captive to Murshidabad by Mir Jafar, who was nicknamed his lordship's "ass"? Can any man in his senses believe that Mir Jafar or any one under him would have ventured to do such a dastardly deed as the assassination of Shiraj without receiving some sort of encouragement, explicit or implied, from Clive ? More especially when it is remembered that Clive and his colleagues were the arbiters of the destiny of Mir Jafar and his familly ?*

Even assuming for the sake of argument that Clive did not instigate the assassination of Shiraj, why did he not condemn this deed and take some steps to punish its perpetrator or perpetrators ? The British blame and condemn Shiraj and try to fix the responsibility on his shoulders for the so-called Black Hole Tragedy. But these very

"Surajah Dowlat will be in the City this evening; the Nabob, who is a humane, generous and honest Prince, intends only to confine him and to allow him all the indulgence which a prison can admit of."

So Clive uttered a barefaced lie when he told the Parliamentary Committee that he knew nothing about Shiraj being brought a captive to Murshidabad.

From the *sangfroid* with which he informed the Select Committee, Fort William, of the death of Shiraj there is very little room not to suspect that Clive instigated the assassination of that unfortunate prince. Thus Clive wrote on the 4th July :

"Gentlemen,—Surajah Dowlat is no more. The Nabob would have spared him, but his son Miran and the *great men* thought his death necessary for the peace of the country, as on his approach to the city, the *jamidars* grew mutinous."

Was not Clive one of *"the great men"*?

Again, in the postscript to his letter dated Muxadavad, 2 July, 1757, Clive wrote to the Select Committee, Fort St. George :

"Surajah Dowla arrived in the city the 2nd at night and was immediately despatched, having created some commotions in the army by the letters he wrote on the road to the several *jemidars*."

There is no expression of sorrow or regret in any one of Clive's letters at the murder of Shiraj. All these circumstances go to confirm the suspicion that Clive was implicated in the assassination of Shiraj.

* "For the moment, the grandees at Murshidabad regarded Clive as the symbol of power, the arbiter of fate, the type of omnipotence who could protect or destroy at will." Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, p. 201.

people have not a word to say in condemnation of the conduct of the perpetrators of the assassination of Shiraj.

Shiraj was a spirited youth, and notwithstanding all that the European writers have said, he was an able man. It may have been, therefore, considered politically expedient to destroy him, for otherwise he might have given some trouble to the English.

Shiraj was not more than twenty-five years* of age at the time of his murder. He reigned altogether about fifteen months. The writers of the English race, from interested motives, have painted him in the darkest colour possible and do not seem to find a single redeeming feature in his character. Shiraj's private character was, no doubt, bad. But then how many Englishmen in India of that period were, in their private characters, paragons of virtue ? Take the case of his opponent, the heaven-born general, Robert Clive. Was he not a moral leper ?

The English behaved most treacherously towards him. Their only excuse was that it was necessity which made them do so. Even one of their writers says :

"Necessity, which in politics usually supersedes all oaths, treaties or forms whatever, induced the English East India Company's representatives, about three months after the execution of the former treaty, to determine 'by the blessing of God' upon dispossessing the Nabob Siraj-ud-Dowla of his Nizamut and giving it to another." (Bolt's *Considerations*, p. 40).

If Europeans can try to explain away their perfidious conduct, certainly strong and cogent reasons can be adduced in favor of Shiraj's alleged intrigues with the French, which mainly caused all his troubles and ruin.

No unprejudiced historian can blame Shiraj for the Black Hole Tragedy, even assuming that that tragedy was not a myth.

Shiraj had to deal with men who lacked all sense of honor and honesty. He had traitors in his camp, whom the English had raised. Of course, with such men, it was impossible for him to rule his subjects justly or fight his enemies successfully.

When Clive and his colleagues started from Madras on their expedition to Bengal, they were instructed to effect a revolution in that province so as to benefit their trade. Writes S. C. Hill:

"It was not, therefore, unnatural for people" (in England) "to ask whether the action of the Select Committee of Bengal had been altogether honest and disinterested, and whether the hope of what they might themselves obtain from the overthrow of Siraj-ud-daula had not to some extent influenced their attitude as representatives of the East India Company towards that Prince."†

Shiraj was reputed to be a very rich prince and his treasury not only full but overflowing. So there can be no doubt that Clive and his friends tried to effect that in Bengal which Cortez and Pizzaro had done in Mexico and Peru. This alone can satisfactorily explain the treacherous conduct of the English towards Shiraj. Of all the English historians, perhaps Colonel Malleson has tried to do some justice to Shiraj. He writes :

"Whatever may have been his faults, Siraju'ddaulah had neither betrayed his master nor sold his country. Nay more, no unbiassed Englishman, sitting in judgment on the events which passed in the interval between the 9th February and the 23rd June, can deny that the name of Siraju'ddaula stands higher in the scale of honor than does the name of Clive. He was the only one of the principal actors in that tragic drama who did not attempt to deceive."§

* 29 or 30, according to the *Muzaffarnama.*
† Hill's *Bengal*, Vol. I, p. CCXI.
§ *Decisive Battles of India, p. 71.*

CHAPTER II.

MIR JAFAR AND HIS RULE

The battle of Plassey was fought for a treacherous cause, in which the English prostituted their military strength. They did not, of course, fight for it with the object of the conquest of Bengal, but only to effect a revolution in that province, so as to benefit their trade. And when Clive entered Muxadavad, after the battle of Plassey, he did not enter it as a conquering hero. Nay, on the contrary, he was afraid to enter that capital, and had to wait outside its outskirts, till its inhabitants had been pacified.

So it is quite evident that Clive could not be regarded as a conqueror. He also never considered himself such. The people of the country looked upon him as a friend and not an enemy and so they suffered him to enter their capital without molestation. But could they have guessed the scheming designs of Clive and his compatriots, which they entertained against their independence and their earthly possessions, they would have treated him and his countrymen very differently from what they did. The people of India are very simple-minded and are no match for occidental diplomatists. They believed in all the specious promises and friendly professions of the English traders. But the time was fast approaching when they were to be rudely awakened and the faith they had pinned in the promises and professions of the English was to be shattered. No one realised more correctly the true character of the English than Mir Jafar. In his after years he bitterly rued the day when he allowed himself to be entangled in the cobweb of the intrigues which the English had so finely spun round him and into which, like an unsuspecting fly, he fell.

Traitors are always detestable creatures. They, of course, lack moral stamina and also very generally high intellectual gifts and imagination. So they can never be called statesmen. They are not inspired by lofty altruistic motives, but, swayed by most sordid personal ambition and desire for selfish aggrandisement, do most dirty work. Such a man was Mir Jafar. And no wonder that as a ruler he was a miserable failure. He had no training as a ruler of men. He had never handled the state machine, and so was not acquainted with the parts, joints and springs which move it and set it going smoothly. And he also did not know how to lubricate and oil the machine to remove friction.

Ali Vardi Khan had usurped the throne of Bengal, though not by any extraneous help or by intriguing with some foreign and unscrupulous merchants. So he knew that the stability of his kingdom could only last by securing the goodwill of the people, by promoting their happiness and by advancing the proper persons without distinction of creed and caste to high positions of trust and honor. It was, therefore, that to almost all the high posts in his gift, Hindus were mostly appointed, because they not only formed the majority of his tax-paying subjects, but also because they

were the fittest persons for those posts. The policy inaugurated by Ali Vardi was rigidly followed by Shiraj-ud-daula. His reign lasted only fifteen months and he had to contend against conspiracies and plots concocted against him, to which he ultimately succumbed. So his short reign can not afford any criterion for the policy of his grand-father which he so rigidly followed.

But Mir Jafar tried to upset the policy of Ali Vardi and to replace the Hindu functionaries by those of his own creed. The step which he took was not one which could enlist the sympathies of his subjects for him. But perhaps he did not care for their sympathies. He leaned for support on foreign bayonets. But those foreigners made use of him as their cat's paw to serve their ulterior designs and threw him overboard when it was convenient for, when if paid them to do so; since they did not possess any sense of honor or honesty.

The first Hindu official whom Mir Jafar tried to extirpate was Ram Narain, the Governor of Behar. He was one of Ali Vardi's men and so he was loyal to his family. He was not in the cabal that had been formed against Shiraj-ud-daula in Bengal. He was at variance with a brother and a brother-in-law of Mir Jafar. Rai Durlabh, one of the principal conspirators against Shiraj, knowing the animosity of Ram Narain against Mir Jafar and his relations, and also how loyal he was to the family of Ali Vardi, did not attempt to gain his concurrence to the conspiracy. When M. Law had left Murshidabad and reached Patna, Ram Narain treated him with all marks of honour and kept him in his province as an important resource to Shiraj, in the event of the latter's hostilities with the English. When hostilities actually broke out, M. Law set out to the assistance of Shiraj; but before he could reach the scene of operations and be of any assistance to him, the battle of Plassey had been fought and Shiraj made prisoner and secretly assassinated, most probably at the instigation of Clive and his compatriots. M. Law had to retire to Patna.

For the security of the English it was necessary to pursue M. Law; otherwise it would have been possible for that Frenchman to make alliance with some other indigenous power of Northern India on behalf of his nation and fight the English. Clive had to undertake an expedition against the French party and for this purpose he sent a detachment under the command of Major (afterwards the well-known General Sir Eyre) Coote, consisting of 230 Europeans, three companies each of 100 Sepoys, 50 Lascars, and two field-pieces, both sixpounders. The detachment left Murshidabad on 6th July, 1757, sailing with their stores, ammunition, carriages, baggage and provisions in 40 boats.

Mir Jafar was foolish enough to imagine that this expedition to Behar would be beneficial to him, for it would mean the ruin of Ram Narain. To gain his object he and his friends industriously circulated all sorts of stories against that Hindu Governor of Behar. It was given out that Ram Narain had been intriguing with the Nawab Vazir of Oudh with the intention of making himself independent of Mir Jafar's government; and it was therefore that he allowed the French party to cross the frontier of his province and reach the territory of Oudh in safety.

When Coote reached Patna the French party had already left Behar. On the

25th July, when he was at a distance of only seven miles from Patna, he received a letter from Ram Narain

"apologizing for the escape of the French party, and imputing it to the want of timely notice from Meer Jaffer."*

He at the same time sent a deputation of his principal officers to Major Coote, who

"informed him that Ram Narain had returned only two days before from an expedition against two disobedient chiefs of Moy and Sader, whose districts lay about 30 miles south-east of Patna ; that immediately on his return he had proclaimed Meer Jaffer Nabob of Bengal, Behar and Orissa ; that he had sent forward 2000 of his troops, horse and foot, in pursuit of M. Law, and that he had disbanded the greatest part of the rest."†

There is no reason to suspect that Ram Narain was not sincere in his professions. But Coote was made to understand by the interested partisans of Mir Jafar,

"that the French party might easily have been stopped, if Ram Narain had so willed: that on hearing of the death of Surajah Dowlah, he had sent to Sujah Dowlah, the neighbouring and powerful subah of Oude, proposing to render himself independent of Bengal, if Sujah Dowlah would assist him with his forces and requesting him to protect the French party on the frontiers, until it might be necessary to recall them to Patna ; that Sujah Dowla encouraged his views, but was prevented by events, which more immediately concerned himself, from marching with his army into Bahar. They likewise asserted that Ram Narain had consulted his confidants on the means of destroying the English detachment. This information determined the Major to proceed with all expedition to the frontiers of Oude."§

Of course, there was no convincing evidence of all these allegations against Ram Narain. But all these stories were invented to deprive him of the governorship of Behar. So there is no wonder that Coote

"on the 12th [August] received a letter from Colonel Clive, instructing him, as a scheme of Mir Jafier's, to return to Patna, and endeavour, in concert with Mahmud Amy Cawn (brother of Mir Jafar) to wrest the government from Ram Narain."**

Coote returned to Patna, but with the forces at his command it was not possible for him to wrest the government from *Ram Narain.* The latter also received information from his friends at Murshidabad of the instructions sent to Major Coote. As a shrewd man of the world, he considered prudence to be the better part of valor and so tried to appease Coote and the partisans of Mir Jafar. On the 22nd August a conference was held in his palace to discuss and reconcile all differences. On that occasion, Ram Narain solemnly denied all the charges brought against him,

"and produced a letter he had just received from Sujah Dowlah, which indicated no such intentions as were imputed to their correspondence ; he then said, it was true, that he had been attached to the late Nabob, because his fortunes had been raised by the princes of his family ; but now that Surajah Dowlah was no more, and none of his family remaining worthy or capable of the government, on whom should he so naturally wish to depend as on Meer Jaffer, whom their common patron, Ally Verdy, had raised so near his own person and dignity. He then called a brahmin, and, in the

* Orme, Vol. II, p. 190 (Madras Edition).

† *Ibid.*, p. 191.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 191-192.

** *Ibid.*, p. 193.

presence of his officers, and a crowd of attendants, solemnly swore allegiance and fidelity to Meer Jaffer, and friendship and good will to Meer Cossim and Mahmud Amy. The two brothers returned the compliment, by taking an oath on the Koran that their heart was clear of all ill-will to Ram Narain, and should continue so. They then embraced him, and all the three Major Coote, as the mediator of this reconciliation."*

But notwithstanding this, Ram Narain was not well treated by Mir Jafar, which will be related subsequently.

Major Coote and his detachment sailed from Patna on the 7th September in boats, which arrived at Murshidabad in seven days. The detachment was stationed in the factory at Kasimbazar. On the 14th September, Clive left Murshidabad for Calcutta, leaving Watts, Manningham and Scrafton to transact the Company's affairs with the Nawab.

The Governor of Orissa, stationed at Midnapore, was also a Hindu, and his name was Ramramsing. Before Clive left Murshidabad, he had been summoned by Mir Jafar to appear before him to settle the accounts of his province. Ramramsing was the head of the spies and so was a very shrewd man. He knew what the summoning of Mir Jafar meant. So instead of appearing in person before Mir Jafar, he sent his brother and nephew to Murshidabad, where of course they were confined. The step which he took was explained by Mir Jafar to Clive as prompted by political expediency, since Ramramsing was alleged to have been intriguing with the French. Clive considered this explanation so satisfactory, that he left Murshidabad without settling the affairs of Midnapore. But when he reached Calcutta, Ramramsing wrote to him complaining of the conduct of Mir Jafar in confining his brother and nephew and telling him that he had collected a large army consisting of 2000 horse and 5000 foot, and was in a position to defy the authority of the new Nawab if the latter was foolish enough to send any troops to coerce or capture him, but that he was willing to pay a nazarana of one lakh of rupees to Mir Jafar and even to pay his respects to him in person, if Clive would stand as mediator and warrant his safety. This Clive did most willingly and recommended Mir Jafar to be reconciled to Ramramsing.

Of the province of Purnia Ogulsing had been appointed Governor by Shiraj-ud-daula after the death of his cousin Shaukat Jang. Mir Jafar was desirous to replace Ogulsing by a Muhammadan favorite of his. Of course, the Hindu Governor would not suffer himself to be displaced without resistance and so had taken up arms against Mir Jafar. A detachment under Kadam Hussein, whom Mir Jafar had intended for the governorship of that province, was sent to coerce Ogulsing. Writes Orme :

"The rebels, more dispirited by the approach of the English troops than the appearance of the Nabob's, quitted their entrenchments, which were strong, and dispersed before they were attacked. Soon after Ogulsing was taken prisoner, on which all the other officers either submitted or fled the country ; and in less than a fortnight, by the 9th of December, Coddum Hussein was in quiet possession of the government."†

The new Nawab attributed these insurrections to the machinations of Rai Durlabh, whom it was now his intention to destroy. But that Hindu chief, not lacking in

* *Ibid.*, p. 194.

† Voll. II, p. 275 (Madras Edition of 1861).

resources, assembled his forces, and would no longer visit the Nawab. Through the mediation of Mr. Watts, however, an interview between the Nawab and Rai Durlabh was arranged on the 17th of October, when reconciliation was brought about by each swearing oblivion of former distrusts, and future friendship.

By the advice of Clive Ramramsing came to Calcutta to see him, when, through his mediation, the brother and nephew of Ramramsingh were released and the latter himself given the guarantee of his appointment. There were disquieting rumours from Behar to the effect that the Nawab Vazir of Oudh had been requested by letters by the widow of Ali Vardi to march and join Ram Narain against Mir Jafar.

It was, therefore, considered necessary by the new Nawab to march his troops into that province. In this expedition Clive also joined him. Mir Jafar was fully determined to deprive Ram Narain of the government of Patna. But it was not at that time the interest of the English to accede to his determination. To quote Orme :

"The Nabob's intention to remove Ram Narain, in order to give the government of Patna to one or other of his more immediate dependants, would inevitably be productive of long disturbance and confusion ; for it could not be doubted that Ram Narain, knowing the Nabob's enmity to him, would, on the approach of the army, offer any terms to Sujah Dowlah for his assistance, unless prevented by assurances he could rely on, that it was not intended to displace him."*

Consequently, Clive had to play the role of a mediator and patch differences between Mir Jafar and Ram Narain and to give the latter necessary assurances that he would not be deprived of the governorship of Behar. A darbar at Patna was held on the 23rd February, 1758, when Mir Jafar appointed his son, Miran, Nawab of Patna—an appointment which was merely nominal—and Ram Narain as deputy to Miran in the Nawabship ; for this favour he exacted from Ram Narain the sum of seven lacs of Rupees.

For over four months the troops were in the field, without firing a single shot. Writes Orme :

"Thus ended this political campaign, in which an army of 50,000 men had marched 300 miles out of their own province, and continued four months in the field, without firing a musket ; but produced the full accomplishment of all that Clive intended."†

Clive, of course, did not foget that he was the servant of a company of merchants. To further the interests of his masters, he forced the Nawab to grant the monopoly of the farm of saltpetre to the English Company. All the saltpetre then in use was made in the country above Patna. The Company was benefited immensely by the grant of the monopoly.

Clive returned to Murshidabad by the middle of May, 1758. But the Nawab returned some days afterwards. The Nawab was not a happy man. His voluntary embrace of the English merchants was proving to him to be something like that of a python. He did not know the state of the treasury of Murshidabad when he was entangled in the conspiracy so deftly woven by the English. He had promised large

* Vol. II, p. 277.
† Vol. II, p. 283.

sums to individual Englishmen as well as to their Company for their help in making him ascend the *masnad* of the Nawabs of Bengal. When he succeeded in his object, he found the treasury was not so full as he had imagined and so he was unable to pay the English what he had promised them.* He had paid enormous sums to Clive, which made that heaven-born general declare before the Parliamentary Committee in 1772, that "the Nawab's generosity had made his fortune easy."† The Nawab had thought that Clive having been bribed so profusely would stand as his friend and exert his influence to release him from the further payment of the sums he had promised to the Company of foreign merchants. He thought that Clive and his compatriots would forgo their monetary claims, a great part of which he had of course paid, but the remainder he was unable to satisfy because the Murshidabad treasury had been now drained of its hoarded wealth and the revenues were not such as after all the necessary state demands had been met to leave enough to pay the English what they claimed as their reward for treachery to Shiraj. To make matters worse for Mir Jafar, his new friends were the direct cause of the decrease of his revenue ; for they engaged in the trade of those articles which had been a source of revenue to the Nawabs of Bengal and as such had been prohibited to Europeans of all nations. Thus wrote Orme :

"but as it is the nature of man to err with great changes of fortune, many, not content with the undisputed advantages accruing from the revolution, immediately began to trade in salt and other articles, which had hitherto been prohibited to all Europeans ; and Mir Jafar complained of these encroachments within a month after his accession, which, although checked for the present, were afterwards renewed, and at last produced much more mischief than even disinterested sagacity could have foreseen." §

But the natives of England, like persons of other European nations, had not come to India for the sake of pilgrimage or to recruit their health. Gold was their god, for they were all Mammon-worshippers. Such being the case, it was impossible for the Nawab to expect that Clive and his compatriots would release him from paying a single farthing less than the amount he had been forced to promise them. In vain did he plead that his treasury had been drained of its accumulated wealth. In vain did he protest against the English merchants injuring the revenues of his country by engaging in the trade of the prohibited articles. In vain did he refer to the wretched condition of his poverty-stricken subjects, and to his troops being in heavy arrears for want of funds. But Clive and his compatriots were inexorable. Like so many Shylocks, nothing

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* "The scantiness of the Bengal treasury was most unexpected, as well as most painful news, to the English, who had been accustomed to a fond and literal belief of Oriental exaggeration on the subject of Indian riches. With great difficulty were they brought to admit so hateful a truth. Finding at last that more could not be obtained, they consented to receive one half of the moneys immediately, and to accept the rest by three equal payments in three years."

-Mill's History, vol. III, p. 135 (5th Edition).

† Sir Edward Colebrooke says that these sums 'were moneys bargained for the sale of a province under a transaction stained with falsehood and treachery throughout.' *Rise of the British Power in the East,* M. Elphinstone, ed. by Sir E. Colebrooke, p. 315.

§ Vol. II, p. 189.

would satisfy them except the stipulated pound of flesh in the shape of the large sums which Mir Jafar had been forced to promise them. When the Nawab made every preparation to march to Behar to coerce Ram Narain, Clive would not join him unless he was paid the instalment of the stipulated sum then due to the Company.

The Nawab. had to submit. The revenues of several districts were assigned to the English merchants. Says Malcolm :

"A supply of money was procured for the extraordinary expenses of the army ; the perwannah, or grant of lands yielded to the Company, was passed in all its forms ; orders were issued for the immediate discharge of all arrears on the first six months of the Nabob's debt, and the revenues of Burdwan, Nuddea, and Hooghly assigned over for payment of the rest :—'So that,' says Clive, writing [8th February, 1758] to the Court of Directors, 'the discharge of the debt is now become independent of the Nabob, which precaution is become absolutely necessary, as his calls for money are greater than he can answer. Nothing but a total revolution in the government can well interrupt your payments."*

But this method of pleasing his foreign friends made the Nawab very unpopular with his taxpaying subjects. The latter saw that all the wealth of the Murshidabad treasury which had been accumulated during the course of several years from the taxes contributed by them was taken out of their country by a people of an alien race and creed, thus impoverishing their land. Writes the historian Orme :

"......the committee by the 6th of July (1757) received, in coined silver, 7,271,666 rupees. This treasure was packed up in 700 chests and laden in 100 boats, which proceeded under the care of soldiers to Nudiah ; from whence they were escorted by all the boats of the squadron and many others, proceeding with banners displayed and music sounding, of a triumphal procession, ... Never before did the English nation at one time obtain such a prize in solid money ; for it amounted (in the mint) to 800,000 pounds sterling." †

The same author has described the discontent which the connection of Mir Jafar with the English produced in the minds of his subjects. He writes :

"Mir Jafar had many relations ; and not only they, but all others who were his adherents or dependants before his accession to the Nabobship, thought they had the best right to partake of the change of his fortunes ; . . . . *But the donations to the English had exhausted the treasury,* . . . . . . Some money had been distributed amongst the army of the government, but much less than they expected ; and their discontent acquired presumption by the complaints of the whole populace of Muxadavad, who had beheld with detestation the gold and silver of the capital ostentatiously carried away by foreigners."§

There was no liberty of action left to Mir Jafar, who was being treated as a mere puppet by Clive.

". . . . . . when tampered with to approve changes in the army and administration, which Jafar wished to make in order to gratify his own favourites, Clive let him understand that he would permit none, as deeming them dangerous to the public tranquillity. . . . . . . Jafar felt these restraints with abomination, which turned his head to notions of emancipating himself from the ascendance of the English."**

* *Life of Clive,* Vol. I, p. 338.

† Vol. II, pp. 187-188. (Madras reprint of 1861).

§ *Ibid.,* p. 195.

** *Ibid.,* p. 196.

Then his troops were discontented for want of pay and he was not in a position to satisfy their claims. No wonder that he had become disgusted with his new Christian friends and is reported to have told one of his favourites,

"that if a French force should come into the province, he would assist them, unless the English released him from all their claims of money, territory, and exemptions."*

Of course, of all peoples, the English in his territory would have been the last to "release him from all their claims of money, territory, and exemptions." †

Disgusted as Mir Jafar had become with the English, he would have no doubt intrigued with the French, had there been any capable man and powerful colony belonging to that nation in Bengal. But with the capture of Chandernagar and the flight of M. Law and his party, it was quite impossible for the Nawab to have received any succour from the French. Under these circumstances it is not quite impossible that he might have turned for aid to the Dutch, whose affairs were still in a flourishing condition in Bengal.§ The Dutch expedition to Bengal will be mentioned presently, but before doing so it is necessary to refer to what led Mir Jafar to throw himself again into the arms of the English and solicit their help.

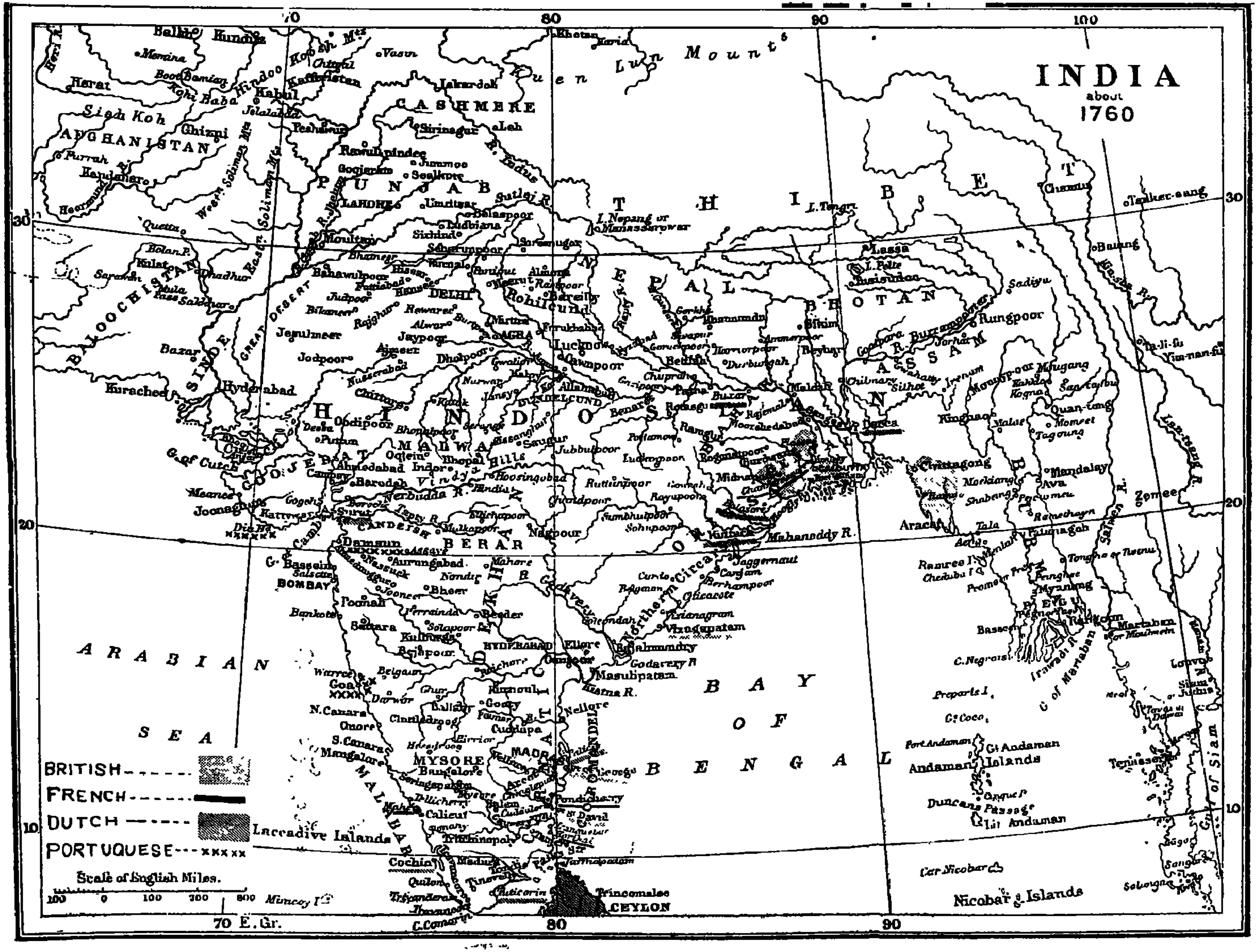
The heir-apparent to the Mughal Emperor of Delhi, who held the nominal title of the Subadar of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, was marching with a large army to make good his claim to those provinces and had actually reached the frontiers of Behar. Mir Jafar was alarmed at the news of the approach of the Mughal prince. His troops, whose pay was much in arrears, could not be relied on to fight against the Shahzada, as that prince was called. He appealed to Clive for help. With a strong force Clive immediately marched towards Patna, the Nawab's son, Miran, also accompanying him. The Hindu Governor of Behar, Ram Narain, with specious promises and small presents, amused the prince and kept him from attacking his capital. But when the forces under Clive and Miran arrived, then there was some fighting. Regarding this expedition to Behar, Clive wrote to one Mr. Spencer as follows :

"The King's son, who, about a year ago, escaped out of the Vizier's hands, has been ever since fishing in troubled waters ; he has been with the Rohillas, the Jauts, the Mahrattas, and Patans ; and, about three months ago, fled for protection to Sujah-u-Dowlah, the Nawab of Oude, a mortal enemy to the Vizier, and was received by him with great respect. He sent his brother-in-law, Mahommed Kooli Khan, with five thousand horse, into these parts, in hopes of effecting a revolution ;

* *Ibid.*, p. 356.

† "It seems, indeed at this time to have been too generally thought that the ethics of Europe were not applicable to Asia ; and their plainest rules violated without hesitation. Englishmen sometimes manifested a degree of cupidity, which might rival that of the most rapacious servants of the worst oriental governments. They seem to have thought principally, if not solely, of the means of amassing fortunes, and to have acted as though they were in India for no other purpose." (Thornton, i., 252).

§ "The Dutch at Chinsurah looked with undisguised dislike on the sudden aggrandisement of Calcutta, and were enraged by the grant to their rivals of liberty to search all vessels in the Hughli. Accordingly they entered into communications with the Nawab, who was already growing restive under Clive's domination." (Roberts, *British India*, p. 141).


INDIA
about
1760
BRITISH
FRENCH
DUTCH
PORTUQUESE
Scale of English Miles.
70 E. Gr.
80
90
100
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
AFGHANISTAN
CASHMERE
PUNJAB
BALOOCHISTAN
SINDE
GREAT DESERT
GOOJERAT
MALWA
HINDOSTAN
BERAR
MYSORE
MALABAR
NEPAL
BHOTAN
ASSAM
THIBET
BOMBAY
DELHI
AGRA
Lucknow
Cawnpoor
Benares
Patna
Dacca
Hyderabad
HYDERABAD
Masulipatam
Vizagapatam
Pondicherry
Madras
Goa
Calicut
Cochin
Seringapatam
Bangalore
CEYLON
Trincomalee
Kabul
Lahore
Moultan
Kandahar
Kurachee
Ghizni
Rangoon
Ava
Martaban
Chittagong
Arracan
Laccadive Islands
Andaman Islands
Nicobar Islands
Gulf of Siam
Kuen Lun Mounts
Mahanuddy R.
Godavery R.
Nerbudda R.
Tapty R.
Sutlej R.
R. Indus

and, indeed, the name of the King's eldest son was so great, that as soon as he entered the province, he was joined from all parts ; and, by the time of his arrival before Patna, his army was forty thousand strong. The ruler of this place being entirely in the English interest, what with small presents and negotiation, delayed the attack of the city for some time, but on the 23rd of March [1759] the fighting began, and lasted till the 4th of April, when our advanced guard arrived within four coss of the city, upon which the Shah Zada and his forces retired with the utmost precipitation, and are now getting much faster out of the province than they came in. We shall continue following them to the bank of the Caramnassa. I hope to secure the peace of these provinces for one year longer at least, by which time the whole of the Nabob's treaty will be concluded.

"The enemy made several vigorous attacks upon the city, and were once in possession of two bastions, but were driven off with great slaughter ; they have certainly lost a great many men. M. Law, with his small party, joined the King's son on the day of their retreat, but could not prevail upon him to make another attack."*

Clive was a favourite son of fortune and, whether he fought any battle or not, good luck never seemed to have deserted him in India. The historian Mill truly wrote :

"This was a fortunate expedition for Clive. Unbounded was the gratitude of Jaffier, that after obtaining for his defender the rank of an Omrah of the Empire, he bestowed upon him, under the title of Jaghire, the whole of the revenue or rent which the Company, in quality of Zemindar, were bound to pay for the territory which they held round Calcutta. The grant amounted to the enormous sum of 30,000 £ per annum. 'Clive's Jagir' is an expression of frequent recurrence, and of considerable weight is the history of India"†

But another Christian writer, J. Talboys Wheeler, attributes the grant of this jagir to Clive to a desire to propitiate him. Says Wheeler :—

"The complicity of Meer Jaffier in (the) Dutch expedition, was beyond all doubt. Indeed it might be conjectured that Clive got his jaghire, not because he had defeated the Shahzada, but because Meer Jaffier was in mortal terror lest Clive should punish him for his intrigues with the Dutch. It seems far more likely that the jaghire was given as a peace-offering than as act of gratitude."§

But Talboys Wheeler is a discredited historian and his judgment is seldom, if ever, sound. The complicity of Mir Jafar in the Dutch expedition is more than doubtful and yet Wheeler does not hesitate to write that it "was beyond all doubt."

Whether Mir Jafar granted the jagir to Clive out of gratitude or it was extorted from him will always remain one of those historical mysteries which cannot be cleared up from contemporary records. For our own part we are inclined to believe that it was extorted from Mir Jafar by Clive.**

* Malcolm's *Life of Clive*, vol. I, pp. 411-412.

† Vol. III, p. 203 (5th Edition).

§ *Early Records of British India*, p. 266.

** Mr. Roberts writes in his *British India*, p. 146 :

"Mir Jafar had procured for him [Clive] from the Emperor the title of *Omrah*, or noble. It was customary, when this rank was conferred on native subjects, for a *jagir*, or revenue derived from land, to be given them to support their rank. In Clive's case, of course, the title was merely honorary, but thinking apparently that a quarter of a million was not a sufficient reward for his services to Mir Jafar, he wrote on his own admission, (Reports of the House of Commons, iii. p. 154) to the

We have said before that, considering the manner in which Mir Jafar was being treated by his English friends, it was not impossible for him to have intrigued with the Dutch and asked their aid against the English. Scrafton writes:

"We were necessitated to strengthen ourselves by forming a party in his own Court to be a continual check upon him."

In August 1759, a Dutch fleet of boats arrived at the river Hugli from Batavia and was proceeding up the river to the Dutch settlement at Chinsura. Clive was informed of this. The two Christian nations, *viz.*, the Dutch and the English, were not at war at that time, and so Clive was in a predicament and did not know how to act. However, he took all the responsibilities of a war upon himself and decided to fight the Dutch. He prevented the advance of the Dutch fleet to Chinsura and it was ultimately destroyed. The Anglo-Indians of those days, owing to their guilty conscience, were not slow in charging Mir Jafar with having invited the Dutch fleet to Bengal. But from what Malcolm writes on the subject in his *Life of Clive* there is no reason to suspect the complicity of Mir Jafar in the Dutch expedition. He writes:

"The Dutch at Chinsura had, like others, suffered from Siraj-ud-Dowlah, who had compelled them to pay a fine of five lacs of rupees. This and other oppressive acts made them rejoice in his downfall, and they addressed to Clive a letter of congratulation on his success in dethroning that prince. Nevertheless they did not recognise Mir Jafar as Subah of Bengal; and the consequence was so hostile a feeling towards them in the mind of that prince, that it required the continual good offices of Clive to preserve terms betwixt them. This was not easy; for their not recognising him was a cause of just and frequent irritation to Mir Jafar. Clive notices the subject in a letter [2nd October, 1758] to the Dutch governor, written in answer to one full of complaints.

" 'I am well acquainted,' he observes, 'with your attachment to the English, and the service you have at all times been ready to show them; but give me leave to observe, Sir, that good offices have always been reciprocal between the two nations: and, indeed, this is no more than we mutually owe each other, considering the close alliance and union of interests that have so long subsisted between us. It gives me, therefore, much concern that you should do me the injustice to reproach me with being in any shape accessory to the obstruction which the Subah has thought proper to lay upon your trade. I have, indeed, heard him make frequent complaints of the ill behaviour of your government towards him, and was really much amazed at his patience, in putting up so long with indignities which you would not have ventured to offer either to Mohait Jang [Aliverdi Khan, the predecessor of Suraj-u-Dowlah] or Suraj-u-Dowlah. I shall not pretend to inquire into your reasons for not acknowledging Meer Jaffer, in the same manner as the preceding Subahs have always been, more especially as you cannot be ignorant that he has received his sunnud from the Mogul; but, for my own part, I cannot conceive how you and your Council will be able to exculpate yourselves to your superiors for the present stoppage of their trade, since it appears evident to me that you have brought it upon yourselves, by your disrespect to a person of his high station.' "*

It is not necessary to make further extracts from Malcolm's work. Clive and several

financial minister of the Nawab, informing him that he had been made an *Omrah* without a *jagir*. The hint was taken, and a little later Mir Jafar, partly out of gratitude for the driving away from Bengal of the Emperor's rebellious son, partly, as was suggested at the time, for fear that his intrigues with the Dutch would be punished, granted to Clive the huge sum of £ 30,000 a year, being the quit rent paid to himself by the Company for land south of Calcutta."

* Vol. II, pp. 70-72

other Anglo-Indians who had served in India were examined before the Parliamentary Committee of 1772, on the subject of the Dutch expedition and Mir Jafar's alleged complicity in it. From their evidence, no one, unless he is biased against Mir Jafar, can be convinced that the Nawab invited the Dutch to Bengal. What seems probable was that the natives of Holland, seeing how the French influence had been totally extirpated in Bengal and how that race was faring ill in Southern India at the hands of the English, thought it an act of prudence to strengthen their factory at Chinsura by sending there additional troops and ships. Knowing also the feelings which Mir Jafar and his son Miran entertained towards the English, they perhaps counted on their help in the event of their armament reaching Bengal. But if they ever entertained such hopes, they were very sadly disappointed when they arrived at Bengal. The Nawab's troops joined the English in attacking and defeating the Dutch. By this defeat inflicted on the Dutch, the English had no more European rivals to fear in Bengal. So their political influence became more powerful than ever. Writes Mill :

"After this heavy blow the Dutch, to prevent their total expulsion from Bengal, were contented to put themselves in the wrong, by paying the expenses of the war ; and the irregularity of his interference made Clive well pleased to close the dispute; by restoring to the Dutch their ships, with all the treasure and effects. The agreement with the Dutch was ratified on the 5th of December, [1759]......"*

Clive had been now a little over three years in Bengal and, by the most unfair means imaginable, he benefited himself, his masters and his compatriots at the expense of the Nawab and the people of that province. All those objects for which he left Madras in October, 1756 had been now accomplished. The revolution which the English merchants in Madras desired in Bengal had been brought about by the instrumentality of Clive. The large and unprecedented sums which the traitor Mir Jafar had been compelled to promise to the English for their help in seating him on the *masnad* of Bengal had been now paid and many other concessions to the Company's trade in Bengal extorted from the Nawab. So Clive now meditated return to England and by the display of his wealth to outshine the aristocracy of his native land and pass for an Indian Nawab. He resigned [on 23rd January, 1760] the government of Bengal and sailed for England from Calcutta on 8th February, 1760.

It has been said before that the battle of Plassey gained by the machinations of Clive and his other compatriots did not signify the conquest of Bengal by the English. It was not like the battle of Hastings, which placed the Norman yoke on the necks of the natives of England. Bengal was never conquered by any European nation. But Clive, after staying in that province for over two years and finding how simple-minded and confiding the princes and people of that province were, and therefore how easily they could be imposed upon, cheated and hypnotised by any unscrupulous nation of Europe, thought that that province could be brought without any difficulty under the direct control of England. The letter which he wrote, dated Calcutta, 7th January, 1759,

* Vol. III, p. 205.

submitting his thoughts on the subject to William Pitt, the Prime Minister of England, is so important that it is given below in extenso.

"The great revolution that has been effected here by the success of the English arms, and the vast advantages gained to the Company by a treaty conluded in consequence thereof, have, I observe, in some measure engaged the public attention ; but more may yet in time be done, if the Company will exert themselves in the manner the importance of their present possessions and future prospects deserves. I have represented to them in the strongest terms the expediency of sending out and keeping up constantly such a force as will enable them to embrace the first opportunity of further aggrandising themselves ; and I dare pronounce, from a thorough knowledge of the country government, and of the genius of the peoples acquired from two years' application and experiencs, that such an opportunity will soon occur. The reigning Subah.......is advanced in years ; and his son is so cruel, worthless a young fellow, and so apparently an enemy to the English, that it will be almost unsafe trusting him with the succession. So small a body as two thousand Europeans will secure us against any apprehensions from either the one or the other ; and, in case of their daring to be troublesome, enable the Company to take the sovereignty upon themselves.

"There will be the less difficulty in bringing about such an event, as the natives themselves have no attachment whatever to particular princes ;......

"But so large a sovereignty may possibly become an object too extensive for a mercantile Company ; and it is to be feared they are not of themselves able, without the nation's assistance, to maintain so wide a dominion ......It is well worthy consideration, that this project may be brought about without draining the mother country, as has been too much the case with our possessions in America. A small force from home will be sufficient, as we always make sure of any number we please of black troops,...... I shall only further remark, that I have communicated it to no other person but yourself ; nor should I have troubled you, Sir, but from a conviction that you will give a favourable reception to any proposal intended for the public good."*

Clive had also been offered by the Mugal Emperor the post of Dewan, or Collector of the revenue of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, one whose duty it was, after paying all the official salaries, to remit the surplus to the Imperial Treasury at Delhi. But Clive declined the post, for he did not like at that time to excite the jealousy of Mir Jafar. William Pitt also did not see his way to second the proposal submitted to him by Clive, for, in his opinion, bringing any portion of India under the direct control of England might endanger the public liberties. Pitt must be considered to have been a very farseeing statesman, and if his decision had been adhered to, India would have been saved the calamities and miseries which she suffered subsequently.

In Clive was combined both the civil and military administration of the Company's affairs in Bengal. But on his departure, Holwell, as a temporary measure, was appointed [28th January, 1760] Governor of Bengal till the arrival of Henry Vansittart from Madras in July, 1760. Colonel Caillaud was appointed to the supreme military command of the Company's troops in Bengal.

Towards the close of the year 1759 a storm was again brewing on the frontiers of Behar. It is said that the injustice of Miran to some of the officers of considerable rank and influence in the Nawab's army before he departed from Patna the preceding year, drove them to conspiracy against Mir Jafar's government and made them invite the Shahzada to invade Bengal once more.

* Malcolm's *Life of Clive*, vol. II, pp. 119 *et seq.*

It would be remembered that Kadam Husein had been made two years previously the Nawab of Purnia. But he proved more troublesome to Jafar than any one of the Hindu Governors whom it was his policy to destroy. Kadam Husein did not pay the stipulated tribute to Jafar and so the latter determined to destroy him. The Nawab of Purnia therefore as a measure of self-preservation had to take the field, and was expected to join with his 6000 seasoned troops the standard of the Mughal Prince.

It was necessary to stop the menaced invasion without any delay. So Colonel Caillaud at the head of a large force left Calcutta and arrived at Murshidabad on the 26th December, 1759. Here Clive also joined him on the 6th January 1760 in order to introduce Caillaud to the Nawab. The stay of Clive at Murshidabad was for a week or so, when he left for Calcutta to make his necessary preparations for the voyage home. Colonel Caillaud also left Murshidabad for the front on the 18th January, being joined by a large detachment of the Nawab's army under the command of Miran.

There would not have been any unnecessary delay for the Murshidabad troops in reaching Patna but for the interruption they experienced in their March due to the encampment of the Nawab of Purnia on the left bank of the river between Murshidabad and Patna. Kadam Husein asked Caillaud for the English Company to engage for his security; and on that condition he professed a desire to remain loyal to Mir Jafar. Colonel Caillaud in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee of 1772 said, that Kadam Husein

"had not declared his intentions openly; but said, he was ready and willing to obey the Nabob's orders in everything, to pay all the revenues that were due, and to prove himself a faithful subject and servant. It was necessary to get more than these general assurances from him; he was at the head of a large body of troops; and as the affairs of Patna were then situated, it was dangerous to leave such a force in his rear, without knowing whether he could trust them. That he endeavoured to settle matters between him and the Nabob as well as he could; he would accept of no mediation but his; he would not see the Young Nabob (Meeran), but took his security, that if he faithfully discharged all the demands the old Nabob had on him for revenues due, that he would endeavour to get the Nabob's consent that he should remain in his command. That this kept him seven days."*

While the Shahzada was on his march on Behar and had actually crossed the river Karamnasa, which formed the Western boundary of that province, news reached him of the murder of his father, Alam Gir. So he proclaimed himself as the Emperor of Hindustan and conferred the title of Vazir on the Nawab of Oudh. With a large army, which he was able now to collect by virtue of his being now Emperor, he advanced towards Patna. The Governor of the province was still Ram Narain, who, (to quote Colonel Caillaud),

"had a considerable army under his command, besides a battalion of our Sepoys, that was left in garrison at Patna by Lord Clive, who joined him upon that occasion, and he marched out of the City with these forces.--That the witness repeatedly wrote to him, and pressed him not to come to an action, but to wait his arrival, and had no doubt then of success against the prince.--

First Report, 1772, p. 158.

That however he chose to follow his own advice; he engaged the prince; two of his principal jemadars deserted him during the action, he was totally defeated and severely wounded, 400 of our *Sepoys* marched to his assistance, when he was surrounded by the enemy, saved him, and were cut to pieces themselves, with three European gentlemen, two officers, and one gentleman, a volunteer.—That the remainder of the battalion secured his retreat into Patna, which the Shahzada immediately invested. That he received the news of his defeat the 11th of February, and marched with all the expedition in his power, such as obliged him on the 15th to raise the siege of Patna; and on the 22nd the two armies met and engaged; the detail of the action is very uninteresting; *That the Young Nabob (Meerran) followed quite a contrary disposition to the one he wanted him to make,* but that he saved him in imminent danger, and the enemy was totally routed. That the instant the engagement was over, the Young Nabob retired to his tent, on account of the wounds he had received—That the witness requested and conjured him to give him ever so small a body of cavalry, and with his *Europeans* and *Sepoys,* fatigued as they were, he would do his best to pursue the enemy, and clear the country of them, that he was deaf to all his entreaties—and his means of pursuit, with the handful of troops he was at the head of, fatigued beyond measure with the forced marches he had made to raise the seige, put it quite out of his power; besides out of the six pieces of cannon which he had in the field, four broke down during the engagement, and some time was necessary to put those carriages in repair. That at length he persuaded the Nabob to leave the City of Patna on the 29th of February, and on the 2nd of March he received advice that the *Shah Zada* (the Prince) was in full march for the province of Bengal. That he had the advantage of a day's march of our army, with an army composed almost entirely of Cavalry, unincumbered with baggage. That on the 7th he got within 20 miles of him; he marched off in the night, and took his way across the mountains, to enter the province of Bengal in another part; a road through which no army before had ever marched; but through which however the witness made a shift to follow him, and on the 4th of April joined the old Nabob, who was in the field. That on the 6th, with their united armies, they got so near the Prince, that he proposed to the Nabob that he would give him a body of cavalry, and some spare horses to assist him in carrying the Europeans, who were exhausted and spent with fatigue; and he would attack the prince in camp that night. This he would not comply with, and the next day he came up however with the rear of their army, a river only dividing them; that he again sent repeated messages to the Nabob, to beg he would only march a body of cavalry, to keep the enemy in play, until he could come up with his infantry; but this he would never consent to, and the enemy marched off unmolested; and in two days after took the same road into the Province of Behar: That afraid of the safety of Patna, which he knew was destitute of troops, he detached Captain Knox, with 200 Europeans, a battalion of Sepoys, and two pieces of cannon, to march with all the expedition he possibly could for the relief of Patna, if the Prince should besiege it: He came in time to save the city; on which the Prince had made two general assaults, and was preparing for a third, when Captain Knox arrived with some part of his detachment, and obliged him to raise the siege a second time. That he remained in camp with the old Nabob, and his son until the 16th of May, when again he marched with his son against the Nabob of Purnea, whom the old Nabob had endeavoured to bring back to his duty, but which the other refused, and would comply with none of his terms, broke his promise with the witness, and was setting out with an intention of joining the Prince. On the 22nd he again reached Patna, and crossed the river there; but before that happened, Captain Knox, whom he had ordered to march from Patna across the river, and endeavour to stop the progress of the Nabob of Purnea, so that we might get up with him, had taken a strong and judicious post, and was attacked by the Nabob's whole army and maintained his post with great bravery. That they joined in pursuit of the enemy who was retreating as fast as they could. On the 27th he came up with them; the young Nabob with his Army in the rear two miles; the cannonading began between the two armies; he soon seized their cannon, dislodged them from all their posts; and would have obtained a complete victory, if foot could have overtaken cavalry, of which his army was chiefly composed; that he had none of

his own, and the Nabob would not send him one horseman ; that they continued pursuing the Nabob of Purnea, until the 3rd of July ; they were to have continued their march next day, when between one and two o'clock in the morning Mr. Lushington came into his tent with a Harcara (or Messenger) and told him the young Nabob [Meeran] was dead ; that it would be difficult to express his surprise, which was followed by his enquiries, to know how this accident had happened which he was told was by a flash of lightning, as he lay on his bed. In a few minutes after, his Duan (or Prime Minister) came to the witness in the greatest distress, assuring him that if some thing was not immediately done, the consequence would be the plunder of the camp, and the Nabob's troops marching off wherever thought proper : There was no way to prevent this accident, and the confusian which must follow, but to endeavour to keep his death a secret from his army, that we might gain time to bring over some of the Jamutdars of the greatest consequence, and attach them to our interest : That they sent for one or two of those he thought he could most confide in, told them the story and requested them as a mark of regard they had for their old master, to continue faithful in the service of the old Nabob, and to bring over, by degrees, as many of the other Jamutdars as they could, to this way of thinking ; that he, on his part, would use all his endeavours with the old Nabob, that all the arrears of pay, and all the just demands they might have, should be settled to their satisfaction. That we then determined, that the army should march back towards Patna ; and give out that the Young Nabob was ill ; this was performed in seven days, and during this whole time, except the people who were entrusted with the secret, the army had no knowledge of the Young Nabob's death. The witness said, this was the narrative of his campaign ; that soon after his arrival at Patna, about the 28th or 29th of July, or the beginning of August, he received advice of Mr. Vansittart's arrival at Calcutta, as Governor."*

We have considered it proper to let Colonel Caillaud speak for himself about the campaign which he conducted against the Mughal Emperor, instead of giving an abstract or compilation of it from various writers on the subjeet. It will be noticed that Caillaud does not call the Mughal Prince Emperor but merely Shahzada. The fact should not be lost sight of that on the occasion of his second invasion of Behar the Mughal Prince was no longer Shahzada, but the real Emperor of Hindustan. Regarding this Prince's first invasion of Behar in 1759 when he was Shahzada and not Emperor of Hindustan, and when Clive proceeded to fight him, Mill wrote :

"The hardihood of Clive was seldom overcome by scruples. Yet the Emperor Alumgeer was legitimate sovereign of Bengal ; and had undoubted right to appoint his eldest son to be his deputy in the government of that province. To oppose him was undisguised rebellion."

Then in a footnote, Mill added :

"The prince, Holwell assures us [Memorial, p. 2], repeatedly offered to grant the English their own terms, if they would assist him in recovering his rights. On what side policy, whether on that which Clive rejected, or that which he chose, is a more subtle inquiry."

In criticising the above views of Mill, H. H. Wilson wrote :

"It was not a question of policy, but one of good faith. By the treaty with Mir Jafar, as well as by the nature of their connection with him,—the English were pledged to assist him against all enemies whatever, and few of the governors of the provinces would have scrupled to consider the Emperor as an enemy if he had sought to dispossess them of their subahs. Even, however, if the theory of obedience to a monarch, who at the very seat of Empire was no longer his own master, could be urged with any show of reason, it would not be applicable in the present instance ; for the Shah-Zada was not appointed by the Emperor to be his deputy in Bengal, and as Clive pleaded to

* First Report, 1772, pp. 158-159.

the Prince himself, no communication of his movements or purposes had been made from Delhi. On the contrary, the Prince was there treated as a rebel to his father. He could not plead, therefore. the Emperor's authority for his incursion, and no other pretext could have afforded him the semblance even of right."*

Although for our own part we are inclined to share the opinion of Mill rather than of Wilson, yet, even if we assume for the sake of argument that the views of the latter are sound regarding Clive's opposing the prince's first incursion, there can be no doubt that on the occasion of his second incursion in 1769, "to oppose him was undisguised rebellion." He was now the Emperpor of Hindustan, and, as such every mark of allegiance and fidelity should have been shown to him by his viceroys and subjects. It was perhaps this consideration of loyalty to the Emperor which induced Miran not to assist Caillaud in the manner which that commandant expected of him and which made him complain so bitterly against the young Nawab. But it was not the interest of the English to suffer Mir Jafar and his son to be faithful and loyal servants to their legitimate sovereign. It was probably on this account that they were at this period meditating to bring about another revolution in Bengal and depose Mir Jafar from its *masnad.*

Miran was the eldest son of Mir Jafar and as such according to the custom of all nations he possessed the best title to succeed his father. In any revolution in Bengal which the English were meditating to bring about, it would have been inconvenient to ignore the just claims of Miran and place an outsider on the throne of Bengal. At such a juncture the death of the young Nawab would naturally create an impression that he was the victim of some foul play. Of course, it was given out that he had been killed accidentally by a flash of lightning.† But we share the opinion of those who suspect that Miran was assassinated, and perhaps Colonel Caillaud had a hand in his assassination. Miran was a thorn in the side of the English. Just a month after his death, Holwell in his address to Mr. Vansittart wrote:

"A party was soon raised at the Durbar, headed by the Nawab's son, *Miran,* and Rajah *Raagebullav,* who were daily planning schemes to shake off their dependence on the *English,* and continually urging to the Nawab, that until this was effected his government was a Name only." §

So his mysterious death, which was not properly investigated, must excite the suspicion that it was due to some foul play on the part of those whom he looked upon as his enemies.

When a proposal arose in the Calcutta Council in March, 1763 to turn out Coja Petruse with his family, who was suspected of acting as a spy of the Nawab, Mr. Watts stated:

"Petruse is well-known to be an intriguing person and to have raised himself, I believe, being a spy betwixt us and Seraja Doula. During Clive's Government he was ordered to quit this Settlement

* Vol. III, p. 202.

† This story was disbelieved by Jean Law of Lauristan, who was of opinion that Miran was assassinated, the tent being set on fire during a thunderstorm to conceal the crime (*Memoire,* ed. Martineau, Paris, 1913, p. 452).

§ *First Report.* 1772. Appendix 9, p, 225.

(Calcutta) and not to have any connections at the Durbar, for having spread and told the Chutta Nawab Miran (Mir Jafar's son) that Colonel Clive intended to take away his life."

THE SECOND REVOLUTION IN BENGAL.

Now the English in less that three years' time after the assassination of Shiraj-ud-daula gained all, nay more than. all, the advantages which they had imagined such an occurrence would secure them. The terms of the Treaty, they had ratified with Mir Jafar, whom they had with the foulest means conceivable helped to gain the masnad of Bengal, were executed to the very letter by that traitor. They could not, with any show of decency, extort more advantages from that Nawab. Of course they did not possess any conscience or any sense of honor or honesty. So they thought it would be advantageous to them to kick the man whom they had made use of in gaining their ulterior ends and who having now seen through their designs would not perhaps consent any longer to be a tool in their hands to oppress his own subjects.

Considerations like the above, must have prompted the English to bring about a second revolution in Bengal. It would seem that from the very day that Howell assumed the governorship of Bengal as a temporary measure from Clive, he was bent on effecting a revolution in that province. This man had been presented by Mir Jafar with a very large sum of money to which of course he had no moral or legal claim. But such was his sense of gratitude that he did not scruple to cut the throat of his benefactor. He commenced intriguing with several persons in order to effect the revolution which was so dear to his heart. Colonel Caillaud was at that time in Behar, whither he had gone to oppose the advance of the Mughal Emperor into Bengal. To him Holwell wrote a letter, dated 24th May, 1760, on the subject of the proposed revolution. At that time that millitary officer did not approve of Holwell's scheme. In replying to the latter's letter, Colonel Caillaud wrote on 29th May 1760 from Camp at Balkishen's gardens :

"Bad as the man may be, whose cause we now support, I cannot be of opinion, that we can get rid of him for a better without running the risk of much greater inconveniences attending on such a change, than those we now labour under.....We cannot in prudence neither, I believe, leave this revolution to chance ; we must in some degree be instrumental to bringing it about ; in such a case it is very possible we may raise a man to the diginity, just as unfit to govern, as little to be depended upon, and in short as great a rogue, as our Nabob ; but perhaps not so great a coward, nor so great a fool, and of consequence, much more difficult to manage. As to the injustice of supporting this man on account of his cruelties, oppressions, and of his being detested in his government, I see so little chance in this blessed country of finding a man endued with the opposite virtues, that I think we may put up with these vices with which we have no concern, if in other matters we find him fittest for our purpose.

"All we can wish to do is, not to suffer the Nabob to impose on us and to check every beginning of an independence he may endeavour to assume ; let us consult and improve on every occasion that offers, the honour and advantage of our employers, and the increase of their trade and credit ; and not let them suffer any additional expense, on account of pursuing any plan, or supporting any system whatever. Bv acting thus, I think we cannot err ; we run at least no risk, and I believe

the Company's affairs may be conducted by us under his Subah, as much to their advantage and credit, as any other, whom a revolution may place in the government."*

But Colonel Caillaud afterwards changed his views and approved of the idea of bringing about a revolution in Bengal. When he appeared before the Parliamentary Committee of 1772, he was asked,

"What were his reasons for approving a revolution in September 1760, which he seemed to disapprove so strongly by the letter he had read, dated in May ? he said, he would, to the best of his recollection, declare those motives, by stating some particulars of his situation at that time in the country. The ascendancy which Lord Clive had over the Nabob, which flowed from the Nabob from a sense of the favours he had received from Lord Clive, was, very soon after he came to the command, at an end. That the witness's constant unwearied attention, to keep up that confidence so necessary between them and the Nabob, was prevented by some very untoward circumstances. Mr. Holwell succeeded Lord Clive in the chair, only by virtue of his rank, in order of succession ; and the certainty of another Governor being soon appointed, was known to the whole country, and of course, that degree of respect which the Nabob would have had to a Governor in other circumstances was not paid to Mr. Holwell ; Mr. Holwell soon saw this, and resented it. The Nabob's exceeding weak and irresolute character, gave plenty of occasions for Mr. Holwell to find fault, and blame his measures ; That he felt them too, and observed them, but he thought that he did his duty best as a faithful servant to the Company, by acting the part of a mediator between them, and by softening, rather than irritating, the ill disposition that subsisted between them. That on this plan he acted throughout the whole course of Mr. Holwell's administration, putting off by delays and sometimes with reasons, every approach to a change of system in that government, which, though in his own heart he adopted, and knew the necessity of, yet he was desirous to keep it off as long as he could, till the necessity of it might press so hard as to make it unavoidable. That when that letter he read was wrote, the Nabob's son was then alive ; his extraordinary death made a great change in the situation of affairs in that country. That Mr. Vansittart's arrival, and the confidence he had in his abilities and judgment, made him without reluctance adopt his plan ; he knew his motives ; they were honest and disinterested, as to himself, honourable and advantageous to his employers and as such as the necessity of the times, the particular situation at Bengal, the general state of the Company's affairs throughout India, have ever in his opinion vindicated the measures pursued. †"

When Vansittart arrived in Bengal to succeed Clive as its permanent Goveror, the conspiracy against the Nawab became very active and assumed gigantic proportions. Holwell was of course the leader of the conspirators. In his address of 4th August 1760 to Vansittart and other members of the Select Committee of Fort William, he said:—

"As my health, and the consideration of other circumstances, will soon oblige me to request permission from the Board to resign the service, I beg leave previous to that step to accompany this short address with such remarks and memorials as may convey to the honourable the President (so lately arrived amongst us) a knowledge of the present state and situation of the Company's affairs, as they stand connected with, or dependant on, the Government of Bengal."

It is not necessary to make further extracts from this address, except the sentence which showed how jubilant Holwell was over the death of Miran. He wrote:—

"However, the sudden death of the Nabob (if made a proper use of) seems to point out a middle

* First Report, 1772, p. 160.

† *Ibid*, p. 161.

way, if things are not gone too far already, to admit of any other than the divesting this family of the Government altogether."

It was now convenient for the English to conspire against the Nawab, to divest him and his family of the Government of Bengal and to raise in his stead, a creature of their own. In Calcutta they held several secret meetings to properly hatch their plots. These meetings were held under the presidency of Vansittart, and the members were Colonel Caillaud, Messrs. William Brightwell Sumner, Joseph Zephaniah Holwell and William M'Gwire. These conspirators met very frequently in September 1760. In their meeting at Fort William, September the 11th, 1760, they delivered their "thoughts on the present state of affairs" as follows :—

Our influence increasing from time to time since the revolution brought about by Colonel Clive, so have we been obliged to increase our force to support that influence. We have now more than a thousand Europeans, and five thousand sepoys, which, with the contingent expenses of an army, is far more than the revenues allotted for their maintenance. This deficiency was not so much attended to whilst the immediate sums stipulated by the treaty were coming in ; but these resources being now quite exhausted, and no supplies of money coming from Europe, it becomes immediately necessary to secure to the Company such an income as will bear them clear of charges, and bring in, besides, a supply for the emergencies of their other settlements, and for providing cargoes for loading home their ships.

"It must therefore be proposed to the Nabob, to assign to the Company a much larger income, and to assign it in such a full and ample manner, by giving to the Company the sole right of such districts, as lay most convenient for our management ; that we may no longer be subject to the inconveniencies we experienced from the late Tuncaws, being orders only on a certain part of the revenues.—From the experienced weakness and unsteadiness of the Nabob himself, and the nature of those dependants who now rule him, and who by self-interested views must naturally oppose every increase of our power, as their own will of course be proportionably lessened ; it is to be supposed, that such a proposal would meet with all the difficulties that could possibly be thrown in our way. Notwithstanding these difficulties, we will suppose we should have weight enough to over-rule his counsellors, and to obtain his consent. We then just keep our present footing. We have a fund for paying our troops ; and those troops must be employed in the service of the Nabob ;............

"The share of influence we now enjoy in these provinces, however great in appearance does not carry with it those real advantages and weighty effects which are necessary not to leave that power in danger of being disputed, and of failing us at a time when we most want it ; and nothing is more probable than that period will happen on a peace. To prevent the evil consequences of this, there seems now to offer such an opportunity of securing to ourselves all we could wish in this respect, as likely may never happen again ; an opportunity that will give us both power and right.

"Another principal motive, that urges us to think of changing our system is the want of money ; a want that is not confined to ourselves alone, but on which greatly depend

"The operations on the coast,

"The reduction of Pondicherry, and

"The provision of an investment for loading home the next year's ships in all the three presidencies."*

It will be seen from the above that no case was made out against the Nawab. Mir Jafar was quite true to his engagements with the servants of the Company. But

* First Report, 1772, pp. 228—229.

it was the most sordid selfishness of the latter which prompted them to desire for a revolution and change Mir Jafar for a subservient creature of their own. Necessity knows no law, and therefore to gain money, they were prepared to sacrifice Mir Jafar. Writes Mill:

"When Jaffier got possession of the Viceroyalty by the dethronement and death of his master Suraj-ad-dowla, and when the English leaders were grasping the advantages which the revolution placed in their hands, both parties, dazzled with first appearances, overlooked the consequences which necessarily ensued. The cupidity natural to mankind, and the credulity with which they believe what flatter their desires, made the English embrace, without deduction, the exaggerations of Oriental rhetoric on the riches of India; and believe that a country which they saw was one of the poorest, was nevertheless the most opulent upon the surface of the globe. The sums which had been obtained from Jaffier were now wholly expended. 'The idea of provision for the future,' to use the word of a Governor, 'seemed to have been lost in the apparent immensity of the sum stipulated for compensation of the Company's losses at Calcutta.' No rational foresight was applied, as the same observer remarks, to the increased expenditure which the new connexion with the government of the country naturally produced; and soon it appeared that no adequate provision was made for it. 'In less than two years it was found necessary to take up money at interest, although large sums had been received besides for bills upon the Court of Directors.' The situation of Jaffier was deplorable from the first. With an exhausted treasury and exhausted country, and vast engagements to discharge, he was urged to the severest exactions:......"*

How to raise money to make both ends meet was the question with the English conspirators now. Again on the 15th September 1760, they met in secret conclave, when they considered "the difficulties on both sides."

"The great objects of our present deliberation are, first, the securing a fund of money for the present and future exigencies of this settlement, as well as the other two presidencies, no money being expected from Europe; and, secondly, The putting an end to the disturbances fomented and kept up by the Shazaddah in several parts of these provinces. That the whole may be united under the Nabob, and he put under the more immediate influence of the Company, whose force is his chief support and dependence. By this means enabling us to join a large body of country troops to our own, to oppose any attempts of European or country powers.

"The question to be considered is, whether we can best arrive at these ends by following the present system of opposing the Shazaddah, or by proposing to him an alliance with the English, and the assistance of part of our forces to proceed with him to Delhi; and support him in his pretensions to the throne."

Then the conspirators mentioned the chief difficulties in following the system then in vogue as well as the second system proposed. They proceeded:

"The raising the sum wanted is a difficulty in both cases, almost unsurmountable. It certainly cannot be obtained without imposing on the Nabob forcibly, terms which of his own good will he never would come into. In favour of the change of system, it is to be said, that the means and resources of the country, from which the money must come, will be more capable of supplying it when the war is removed by the march of the Shazaddah to the Northward.

"Consequently those which we can prevail on to take part with us in this project, and to assist us in bringing the Nabob into it, will be more ready to advance money, upon the promise of holding the principal employments.

"And as on both sides there must be some kind of force or violence exerted over the Nabob's inclinations, it may be done with a better grace, as well as more effect, by means of orders from the Prince.

* Vol. III, pp. 213—214.

"The Committee therefore are of opinion, all circumstanees considered, that the settlements here will be more secure with the forces that will remain here, if by joining our army to the Shazaddah, and marching with him to the Northward, we can put an end to all the inland trouble here, than in the present disposition of keeping that army at Patna, to make head against the Shazaddah, especially if we can procure such terms as will enable us to assemble on any occasion a large country force to co-operate with us here; and such terms, we doubt not, the Shazaddah will immediately offer."

So they unanimously resolved to enter into an alliance with the Shahzada, and also to intrigue with Kasim Ali and Rai Durlabh.

"The president is accordingly desired to press Kasim Ali Cawn on the subject of our expenses, and our great distress for money, so as to draw from him some proposal of means for removing those difficulties; by which probably we may be able to form a judgment, whether he might not be brought to join in this negotiation, and in procuring the Nabob's consent. There is another person here, Roydullub, who has been long under our protection; and whose attachment to the Company is not to be doubted. Through him it is thought this intention may best be opened to the Shazaddah, but as an interview between him and the president at this time, might look suspicious, and give an alarm to the Nabob, Mr. Holwell is desired to open the affair to him, and take his advice how best to manage."*

So Messrs. Vansittart and Holwell intrigued with Kassim Ali and Rai Durlabh and in the meeting of the Select Committee of Fort William, September 16, 1760, reported the conversation they had with the latter the previous night. Vansittart reported

"That without letting him know anything of our design, he had led him to make such declarations of his desire to have the rule over the Nabob, and the general management of the affairs of the province as amount almost to a proof of his readiness to act the part intended for him.

"After telling him much of our regard, and of our opinion of him as the fittest person for conducting the great affairs of the Bengal Government, I began to make him strong representations on the subject of the Company's expenses;...

"In answer to this, Cassim Ally Cawn replied, that he had it not at present in his powers to provide in a proper manner for the supply of the Company. That if we could undertake to give him the general management of the country, by taking it out of the hands of those who are now interested with it by the Nabob, he would then make such assignment in favour of the Company, as should be perfectly to our satisfaction. ......Cassim Ally Cawn professed a regard for Roydullub, and a desire to see him; but as it was thought such an interview could not be brought about with secrecy; and if known, would give an alarm to the Nabob; it was therefore determined to confide in Coja Petrose as the fittest person to make known our whole plan to Cassim Ally Cawn."

Holwell, who had been directed to intrigue with Rai Durlabh, reported to the meeting that Rai Durlabh

"received the overture with much satisfaction, and approved in general of the plan; .... He assures the Committee, he highly approves of the intended promotion of *Meer Cassim Ally Cawn* to the Dewanee, and will most readily co-operate with him in all matters, conducive to the completion of our plan, as the only possible means left to recover the peace and flourishing state of the provinces, and revive the Company's trade and influence."†

The English succeeded remarkably in their intrigues against the Nawab, whom they

* First Report, 1772, pp. 229—230.

† *Ibid*, pp., 230—231.

ultimately deposed from the throne of Bengal in the middle of October, 1760.* How they effected this will be evident from the following letter from Vansittart and Col. Caillaud of 21st October, read before the Select Committee held at Fort William on the 24th October, 1760 :

"Gentlemen, The Governor wrote you yesterday, of the affairs here being settled to the Company's advantage. We shall now have the honour to acquaint you of the steps by which we advanced to this point of success.

"The Nabob's visit to the Governor at Cossimbazar, the 5th of the month, as well as that we paid him the next day in return, passed only in general conversation. The 18th, he came here to talk upon business. In order to give him a more clear and more full view of the bad management of his ministers, by which his own affairs as well as the Company's are reduced to so dangerous

* In the introduction (p. viii) to Vol. III to "Calendar of Persian Correspondence" (Calcutta 1919), we find :

"The *Nazim* very soon saw that he could not satisfy the servants of the Company, unless he yielded to each and every exorbitant demand as it was put forward. His treasury was already drained of its last coin in making good the lavish promises to the Company and its chief servants individually. Bengal was bankrupt, and was fast nearing anarchy. The invasion of the *Shahzadah* made matters worse. It exposed the utter helplessness of the *Nazim* and showed the Company how completely he depended on them to defend his territories from outside attacks. They for their part considered that the services which their troops rendered him on this occasion, justified them in seeking yet further privileges, among which was the grant of the *Faujdari* of Sylhet and Islamabad. But the *Nazim* refused to go so far, and the relations between him and the Company were strained to the breaking point. All this while a shrewd and ambitious young man was watching the development of events. Qasim Ali Khan (often called Mir Qasim) had been deputed by his father-in-law Nawab Mir Jafar to go to Calcutta as his representative to settle matters with the Council. He asked for a private meeting with Vansittart, who was now the Governor at Fort William, and then and there struck a shameful bargain on his own account. He promised the cession of three districts of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong to the Company, if his father-in-law could be removed from the masnad to make room for him. The temptation was too much to be resisted. In October 1760 the old ally of Plassey was deposed by the Council, and the new friend of the Company was installed in his place."

Mir Kasim was married to Fatima Begum, daughter of Nawab Jafar Khan. He "was highly talented and qualified and was proficient in astrology and mathematics. From the very beginning his career looked promising.

"... (He) appropriated a box of valuable jewellery belonging to Lutfunnissa, wife of Siraj-ud-daula, at the time of his going in pursuit of him. By this means his financial position was improved.

"... After the death of Meeran he used to go to his father-in-law very often. So marked and conspicuous were his services that Meer Mohammad Jafar Khan had once to send Meer Mohammad Kasim Khan to the English at Calcutta. As Meer Mohammad Kasim Khan was, comparatively speaking, wiser and more prudent than his relative, he fully impressed it on the minds of the English that he too was their friend. The English considered" him " to be possessed of higher administrative powers.... than......Meer Mohammad Jafar Khan. As there was no other man in the family of Meer Mohammad Jafar Khan better fitted than Meer Mohammad Kasim Khan for responsible work, Meer Kasim was very often entrusted with missions and used to go to the English at Kasimbazar on behalf of his father-in-law. As he discharged the duties entrusted to him with great tact and ability, he was much respected both by the civil and military officers." (Translation of Maharajah Kalyan Singh's Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh, by Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Husain Khan, *J. Bi & Or. R. S.* Sept. 1919, pp, 344—345.

a state, and the inhabitants in general to want and misery ; we had prepared three letters, which after a short and friendly introduction, the Governor delivered to him......

"The Nabob seemed much affected by the perusal of the letters, but endeavoured more to put an end to the conference than to propose a remedy to the evils. We, however, prevailed on him to send for his dinner to Moraudbag, and in a manner insisted on his coming to some determination for the immediate reform of his government. At length he confessed himself, through age and grief, incapable of struggling against so many difficulties. He desired time to consult with his friends. We told him the men with whom he had lately advised were not his friends but his greatest enemies ; that his returning again in the midst of them, would only be the means of augmenting his difficulties ; that he had much better take the assistance of one from among his relations, on whose true attachment and fidelity be might more safely rely ; he named five or six, and among them Kassim Aly Khan. We asked him which of that number was the most proper to assist him in his present exigencies. He replied, without any hesitation, that Kassim Aly Khan was the most proper. Neverthless it was with the utmost difficulty we could prevail on him to send for him ; and so very late, that before *Kassim Ali Khan* could arrive, the old Nabob was so extremely fatigued and in such a state of anxiety, that we could not refuse his return home to take his rest. We were convinced indeed, that it would be to no purpose to keep him ; for such was the jealousy he discovered with respect to *Kissm Aly Khan* that we saw he never would consent, without some sort of force, to give the other the means of restoring order to his affairs. An hour or two after the Nabob's departure *Kassim Ally Khan* arrived, and seemed to be extremely apprehensive, that the Nabob, instead of trusting him with the management of affairs, would endeavour by some means or other to get rid of him. We agreed therefore in opinion with him, that he should not go to the Nabob's house, until measures were taken for his security. We resolved, however, to give the Nabob the next day (the 19th) to reflect upon the letters before-mentioned, in hopes he would propose some means of regulation. We heard nothing from him all day, but found by our intelligence, that he had been in council with his old advisers, *Keneram, Moonital* and *Checon,* whose advice, we were sure, would be contrary to the welfare of the country in general, and that of the Company in particular. We determined therefore to act immediately upon the Nabob's fears. There could not be a better opportunity, than the night of the nineteenth afforded, it being the conclusion of the Gentoo feast, when all the principal people of that caste would be pretty well fatigued with their ceremonies. We determined therefore that Colonel Caillaud, with two companies of Military, and six companies of Sepoys, should cross the river between three and four in the morning, having joined Kassim Ally Khan and his people, march to the Nabob's palace, and surround it just at day-break. Being extremely desirous of preventing any disturbance or bloodshed, the Governor wrote a letter to the Nabob .... and delivered it to the Colonel, to send it to him at such time as he should think most expedient....

"The necessary preparations being accordingly made with all care and secrecy possible, the Colonel embarked with the troops, joined Kassim Aly Khan without the least alarm, and marched into the courtyard of the palace, just at the proper instant. The gates of the inner court being shut, the Colonel formed his men without, and then sent the Governor's letter to the Nabob, who was at first in a great rage, and long threatened he would make what resistance, he could, and take his fate. The Colonel forbore all hostilities ; and several messages passed by the means of Mr. Hastings and Mr. Lushington, ... The affair remained in this doubtful state about two hours ; when the Nabob finding his persisting was to no purpose, sent a message to *Kassim Aly Khan,* informing him, he was ready to send him the seals, and all the ensigns of dignity, and to order the Nobit to be struck up in his name provided he would agree to take the whole charge of the Government upon him, to discharge all the arrears due to the troops. to pay the usual revenues to the King, to save his life and his honor, and to give him an allowance sufficient for his maintenance. All these conditions being agreed to, *Kassim Ally Khan* was proclaimed.*"

First Report, 1772, p. 231.

The above is the version of the English as regards the manner in which they effected the second revolution in Bengal. Assuming that every word of what they wrote is true, it shows what treachery they practised in gaining their selfish end.* Perhaps in the arrest of Montezuma and the Inca Athahualpa, Cortez and Pizarro were not guilty of such base treachery as were Vansittart and Caillaud in deposing Mir Jafar from the masnad of Bengal.

Mir Jafar repaired to Calcutta, where he was safely lodged.

On December 14th, 1760, in a letter to the Governor, Mir Kasim expressed his opinion that a sum of Rs. 2,000 a month was sufficient for Mir Jafar's expenses.

It was probably on this being made known to Mir Jafar that he made the Governor write his letter of December 20,1760, in which it was stated that Mir Jafar

"has relinquished the subadarship. He intends to go to Kerbala and hopes for sufficient money for that purpose."†

It was necessary to make out something like a case against Mir Jafar, in order to justify his deposition. So the English authorities of Calcutta met at a consultation on 10th November, 1760, when a memorial setting forth the causes of the late change in the Subahdarship of Bengal was read. It was stated in the memorial that

"The Nabob *Jaffier Ally Cawn*, was of a temper extremely tyrannical and avaricious, at the same time very indolent, and the people about him, being either abject slaves and flatterers, or else the base instruments of his vices ; ...numberless are the instances of men, of all degrees, whose blood he has spilt without the least assigned reason."

The English tried to paint Mir Jafar as a monster in human form and guilty of all sorts of crimes and enormities. He was described as being the author of several massacres. But that this was not true is evident from what Clive and his colleagues wrote to the Directors of the East India Company in the supplement to their letter dated Fort William, the 30th September, 1766. They wrote :

"In justice to the memory of the late Nabob Meer Jaffier, we think it incumbent on us to acquaint you, that the horrible massacres wherewith he is charged by Mr. Holwell, in his 'Address

* Lushington, who held the situation of linguist to the army and interpreter to Mir Jafar in the conversation between him and Colonel Caillaud wrote in a letter, dated 3rd December 1760, to Clive, that

"a meeting was held between the Colonel (Caillaud) and the Nabob, who made the following speech, as well as I can remember :

"The English placed me on the musnad ; you may depose me if you please. You have thought proper to break your engagements. I would not mine. Had I such designs I could have raised twenty thousand men, and fought you if I pleased. My son, the Chota Nabob (Meeran) forewarned me of all this." (Malcolm's *Life of Clive*, Vol, II, p. 268).

Malcolm added to the above,

"That Mr. Lushington did not concur very cordially in the measures described, may be inferred from his concluding observations. 'The Company,' he observes, 'are to receive the countries of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, for this service. I, therefore, should be glad to know how this Nabob will be any more able to pay his people than the old man after having given away a third part of his revenues'."

† *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. I, pp. 43, 44.

to the Proprietors of *East India* Stock' (p. 46), are cruel aspersions on the character of that prince which have not the least foundation in truth."*

Such was the scrupulous regard for truth which the accusers of Mir Jafar possessed! The Christian Spaniards under Pizarro brought their victim the Inca before a tribunal and offered him an opportunity to answer the charges they had preferred against him. But the Christian English under Vansittart did not afford any opportunity to Mir Jafar to answer the charges of which he had been accused. But it was not their object to do justice to Mir Jafar, or even to treat him fairly. They acted on the proverb, "give a dog a bad name and then hang him." By deposing Mir Jafar they gained their selfish ends and were richer by twenty lacs of rupees.

Scheming and designing as the natives of England then were, their compatriots in Bengal would not have conspired to bring about the second revolution in that province, were it not to benefit them very materially. The advantages which they secured from this revolution were many. Shiraj-ud-daula had at first prohibited the Company from establishing a Mint at Calcutta and coining their own money. But he was, however, afterwards induced to permit them under certain restrictions to establish their own Mint at Calcutta. But this does not seem to have been done in Shiraj-ud-daula's time. It was after the battle of Plassey that Orme writes that

"A mint was established at Calcutta and the first rupees were coined there on the 19th of August 1757."†

But the mint did not prove such a source of income to them as they had imagined. In their letter of December 29, 1759, the Calcutta authorities complained that the mint was a loss to them owing to the Seths.

"Our Mint is at present of very little use to us, as there has been no bullion sent out of Europe this season or two past, and we are apprehensive that it will never be attended with all the advantages we might have expected from it, as the coining of Siccas in Calcutta interferes so much with the interest of the Sets that they will not fail of throwing every obstacle in our way to depreciate the value of our money in the country, notwithstanding its weight and standard is in every respect as good as the Siccas of Moorshedabad; so that a loss of batta will always arise on our money, let our influence at the Durbar be ever so great." §

The Seths, who from their enormous wealth, were the bankers, mint-masters and political guides at Murshidabad, understood the interest of their own government, and did not encourage the circulation of the Company's money in the Nawab's territory. This was considered a grievance by the English, which the revolution afforded them an opportunity to remove. They stipulated with Mir Kasim that no batta should be charged on the Company's coins. Vansittart and Colonel Caillaud in their letter of the 21st October, 1760 to the Select Committee at Fort William wrote :

"A very severe order has already been issued, forbidding all the shrafs and merchants to refuse the *Calcutta* Siccas, or to ask any batta on them." **

* *First Report* 1772, p. 444.

† Vol. II, p. 118.

§ Long's *Selections from unpublished Records of Government for the years 1748 to 1767, pp. 164—65.*

** *First Report*, 1772, p. 232.

Of course, this was a great wrong inflicted on the Nawab and his subjects, for it decreased one of the sources of revenue and so made the economical condition of the Murshidabad Government worse. Politically also it was meant to deprive the semblance of independence which the Murshidabad Government possessed in the eyes of the common people.

In the letter from which an extract has already been given above, Vansittart and Colonel Caillaud wrote :

"The advantages to the Company are great indeed. The Firmaunds for the countries of *Burdwan* and *Midnapur* and *Chittigan*, we shall receive immediately, as well as that for half of the Chunam already produced at *Silhet*..............A supply of money will be sent with the Colonel for the payment of the troops at *Patna*, and we have even some hopes of obtaining three or four lacks besides to send down to *Calcutta*, to help out the Company in their present occasions there, and at *Madras*.

"..........We are the more pleased with this fortunate event at this time, when the approach of peace in *Europe* gives us reason to fear the other *European* nations will find leisure to disturb us here. We shall now have strong resources within ourselves, and an ally whose attachment to the Company may be relied on." *

If the advantages to the Company were great, the advantages to Vansittart, Caillaud and their other colleagues were greater still. For these men extorted from Mir Kasim very large sums of money, which were euphemistically described as presents. Regarding these so-called presents, Amyatt in his Minute, dated Fort William, the 5th April, 1762, wrote:

" The Minute given in by the President the 22nd *March*, has not in the least uttered the sentiments of Mr. Amyatt, in regard to the demand proposed by him to be made from *Cossim Ally Cawn*, of the Twenty Laks of Rupees for the use of the Company, as he finds nothing in the minute to invalidate the reason whtch induced him to propose that the demand should be made; nor 'did any minute or expression of Mr. *Vansittart's* ever imply such money was not to be received, but the contrary; and only rested the payment of it to the Nabob's generosity, after his other expenses were defrayed, which was not risking much; for whilst we remain so powerful in this country, such a promise the Nabob will look on as binding as a bond; and the taking a bond might bear a bad appearance; for it's acknowledged that a paper was received from him, containing a promise of 20 Lacs of Rupees to Messrs. *Vansittart, Caillaud, Holwell, Sumner*, and *M'Gwire*. Now it's not to be imagined he would have offered so large a sum to these gentlemen, to the exclusion of the other members of the Council and Select Committee (an offer before unprecedented) but, as a consideration to engage them to conclude with him a Treaty, from whence he was to reap so much advantage, without regard to the opinions of the rest of the Board."†

But their conscience, if they ever possessed any, was so hardened and they were so lost to all sense of honour and shame, that they never paid any heed to what other people said as to their conduct.§ Since Mammon was their God,

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* *Ibid.*, p. 232.

† *Ibid.*, p. 361.

§ When the deposition of Mir Jaffar became known in England, the Court of Directors of the East India Company seemed to appear in their saintly garb by despatching a letter to Calcutta, dated October 7, 1761, in the course of which they wrote:

"We cannot help observing that it is to the great regard the Company have always had to a faithful observance of their agreements, they have acquired and hitherto preserved a reputation with the Natives of India. We could have wished therefore the situation of affairs would have admitted

they cared for nothing else but glittering gold. Regarding their bad faith towards Mir Jafar, Amyatt, in the course of the Minute from which an extract has been given above, wrote that Mir Kasim

"can have no security that we will keep our faith with him, better than we did with his father-in-law to whom we were bound by engagements more solemn than those since entered into with him : nor can he ever acquit himself of his treachery to *Jaffar Ally Cawn,* who must ever keep alive the suspicions now burning in his breast.—Mr. Amyatt does not allow the smallest degree of merit to Cossim Ally Cawn for having discharged the payments due to the Company and his troops. His being in a condition to do so was entirely owing to the happy change of affairs, by the defeat of the Shahzadah." *

Several authors have written very strongly regarding the bad faith of the English towards Mir Jafar. Thus Torrens, in his *Empire in Asia,* writes :

"The iniquity of this transaction finds few apologists even among those who have taken upon themselves to dress and enamel oriental deeds for European view. The treaty with Meer Jaffer still subsisted, and, measured by the elastic rules of that convient code of public morality which conquerors in all ages have striven to pass off under the guise of international law, there was no pretence for such behaviour. He was the sworn and blood-knit ally of the Company and if ever men were bound by decency to maintain at least the forms of good-faith, the Governor and Council of Calcutta was so bound. Yet being so, for the sum of £ 200000 to them privately paid and for the cession of three rich provinces they sold their too confiding friend and ally."

Regarding the character of Holwell, who conceived the idea of the second revolution in Bengal, one of his compatriots, the author of *Reflections on the Present State of our East India Affairs,* wrote :

"Being blessed with a genius, uncommonly fertile in expedients for raising money and further unclogged by those silly notions of punctilio which often stand in the way betwixt some people and fortune, he had projected and put in practice several inferior manouvres but this *cfief d' oeuvres,* this master-scheme, though formed almost as soon as he came to power, time did not allow him the honour of executing."

Such was the character of the authors of the second revolution in Bengal, which has not found any supporter among British historians.

keeping terms with Jaffer Ally Khan, that even the least handle for a pretence might not have offered to prejudiced people to make use of to throw any reflections upon this transaction."

This was no doubt a counsel of perfection ; but the honourable members of the Court forgot that a scrupulous regard or 'a faithful observance of their agreements,' would not have enabled the Company to establish or extend their power in India. It was by utter disregard and flagrant violation of all tenets of morality and justice and distinct bad faith, that the Company succeeded in acquiring political supremacy in India.

* *Ibid., Report,* 1772, p. 362.

CHAPTER III

MIR KASIM AND HIS RULE

No sooner was Mir Kasim seated on the *masnad* of Bengal than he tried to fulfil all the articles of the treaty he had concluded with the representatives of the East India Company in Bengal. He granted them the permission to establish a Mint in Calcutta and allowed their coins to pass current in Bengal without any one demanding or insisting on a discount upon them.* The three provinces of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong were also handed over to them.†

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* The following is a translation of the *perwannah* for the establishment of a mint given to the Company by Kasim Ali.

"To the Noblest of Merchants the English Company be the royal favour. In Calcutta a Mint is established. You shall coin gold and silver of equal weight and fineness with the Assrefees and Ruppees of Moorshedabad in the name of Calcutta. In the Suburbs [Subahs?] of Bengala, Behar and Orissa, they shall be current and they shall pass in the Royal Treasury and no person shall demand or insist on a discount upon them. Dated the 11th of the moon Zeehada in the 4th year". (Long's *Selections*, p. 227).

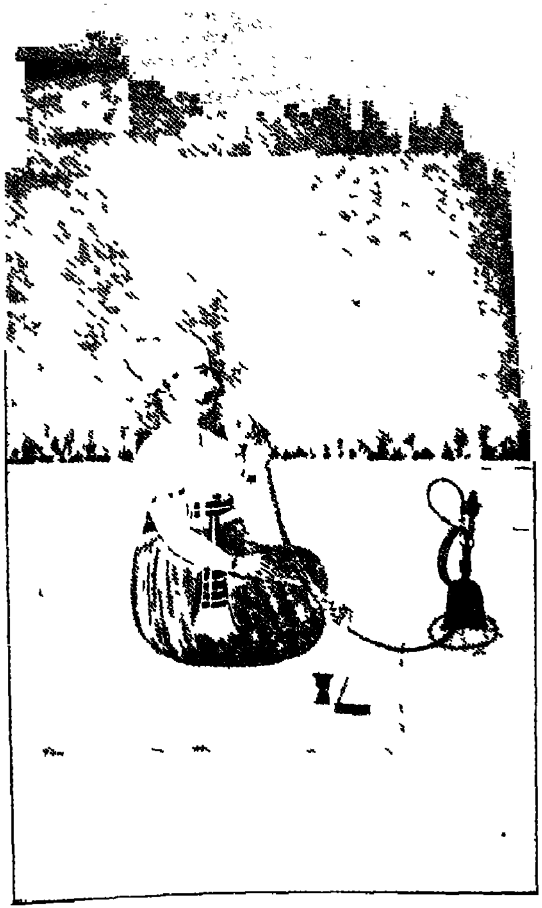
Notwithstanding the above *perwanna* the Nawab's subjects refused to take the Company's Siccas without the batta, so the Company's business was at a standstill. This was represented to Mir Kasim, whom they begged to send them a perwannah for the Calcutta Siccas to be stamped as those of Muxadavad. It was however not customary that one city Siccas should have the name of those of another city. But he wrote to the Governor,

"I will tell Roy-royan to threaten the zemindars and others not to want the batta on the Calcutta Siccas, and those that will not take them without the batta send their name to me and I will severely chastise them, and also the names of those that take batta send their names to me and I will fine them for it and chastise them properly, then they will not act so again, and the Calcutta Siccas will go the same as those of Muxadavad." (Long's *Selections*, p.242).

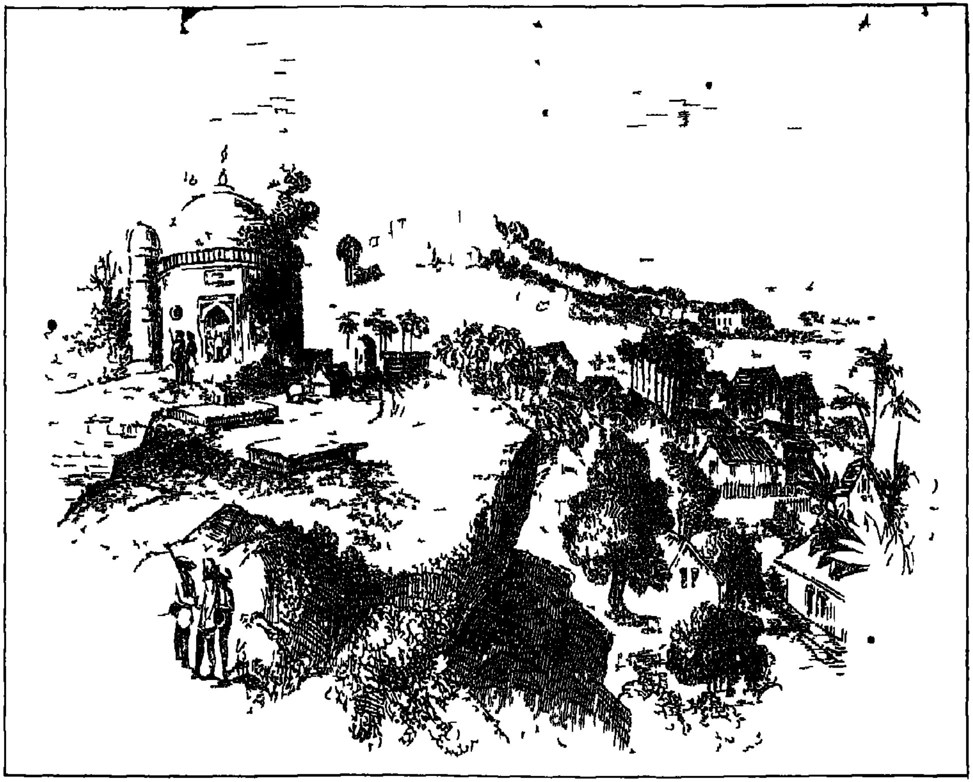
† The following is a translation of the *sunnud* in Burdwan under the seal of the Nawab Mir Kasim :

"To the Zemindars, Canoongoes, Talookdars, Tenants, Husbandmen, and Chief Villagers of the Pergunnah of Burdwan, &c.—The Zemindaree of the Raja Tilluck Chand, in the districts of the Subah of Bengal, be it known that whereas divers wicked people have traitorously stretched forth their hands to plunder the subjects, and waste the royal dominions, for this reason the said Pergunnah, &c. is granted to the English Company in part disbursement of their expenses, and the monthly maintenance of five hundred European horse, two thousand European foot, and eight thousand sepoys, which are to be entertained for the protection of the royal dominions. Let the above officers quietly and contentedly attend and pay to the persons appointed by the English Company the stated revenues, and implicitly submit in all things to their authority, and the office of the Collectors of the English Company is as follows :

"They shall continue the Zemindars and Tenants in their places, regularly collect the revenues of the lands, and deliver them in monthly for the payment of the expenses of the Company, and the pay of the above-mentioned forces, that they may be always ready cheerfully and vigorously to promote the affairs of the King. Let this be punctually observed." Dated the 14th of the month Rubbeeulawul 1st *Sun* answering to the 1st of the month Cartic 1176, Bengal style.



Mir Kasim



Monghyr, View within the Fort

But the State treasury of Murshidabad contained a very insignificant sum of money and so Mir Kasim found great difficulty in fulfilling the promise he had made to the Company of paying them in hard cash. However, he never swerved from keeping his word with them and certainly he could not be charged with 'bad faith.' In his letter of December 1760 to the Governor of Bengal, Mir Kasim wrote:

"I crave from the Almighty that I may always be true to my agreement."*

To be true to his agreement with the English, he did things which were neither just nor proper and which made him very unpopular with his subjects. He extorted money from the landed aristocracy and wealthy people of his dominions by applying every sort of torture to satisfy the greed of his foreign allies. Thus in the letter from which one sentence has been given above, Mir Kasim wrote to the Governor:

"The removing the Zemindar is a matter of no moment, because the collecting of the King's revenues is of the greatest importance; for this reason these removals frequently happen. At this time I am in great want of money for the sepoys and other expenses. Rammanund is a wealthy man and therefore I hope you will give orders to have him sent to me very speedily."†

With the help of the Seths and by converting the jewels and plates of the State into current coins of the realm, he succeeded in paying off the English the sums he had promised them. Consequently they were extremely pleased with him.

But the administration of Bengal was not a bed of roses for him—nay, it was full of thorns. He had to repel foreign aggression, and put down internal insurrections. But the worst enemies he had to deal with were the English—whether his declared friends or foes—who made his life extremely miserable.

The foreign aggression was the renewed invasion of Behar by the Emperor of Delhi. As the military operations against that representative of the royal house of Timur and Babur were chiefly conducted by an officer named Major Carnac, it is necessary here to state that he succeeded Colonel Caillaud in the command of the troops in Bengal. In his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1772, Carnac mentioned the circumstances which gave him the command of the troops in Bengal. He said:

"I left Bengal in February 1768, with Lord Clive, on my return to Europe. At my arrival at Saint Helena, I had information that the Court of Directors had appointed me Major of their settlement at Bengal, and Commander of their Forces there.

"In consequence of that information, I availed myself of the opportunity of one of the Company's ships that was at *Saint Helena* and went back to Bengal. I arrived in the Mouth of the River, I think, in the beginning of *October* in that year; but being detained there five or six days by contrary winds I suppose it was about the 12th or 13th before I arrived at *Calcutta*. I there received a letter

"*N.B.*—The sunnuds for the Chucla of Midnapore in the districts of the Subah of Orissa, and for the Thannah of Islamabad or Chattgaum appertaining to the Subah of Bengal, are worded as the above." Long's *Selections*, pp. 224-225.

When the above purwannah was forwarded to the Raja, he wrote a letter to the Governor describing the deplorable state of Burdwan. He also furnished the Company with accounts of the Zemindari. *Vide* Long's *Selections*, pp. 226 and 228.

* Long's *Selections*, p. 243.

† *Ibid.*, p. 243.

from Mr. Vansittart, who had heard of the ship's being in the river, informing me he was gone to Muxadavad with Colonel Caillaud, and wished me to follow him as soon as possible. I accordingly tarried but a very few days at Calcutta, and proceeded up to Mr. Vansittart. In my way to one of the palaces, called Moradbog, where Mr. Vansittart was, I of necessity passed by the Nabob's palace, while Colonel Caillaud, with the troops, was there, it being the very day of the revolution, in the act of making the revolution, and yet everything was so quiet, that I passed the place without having any idea of the matter. Mr. Vansittart, upon our meeting, informed me of what had been transacted."*

The officer whom Carnac succeeded, had very largely benefited by the revolution. But not so Carnac. It was perhaps this reason which made him an enemy of Kasim Ali and join the party of the English in Bengal who were opposed to the dethronement of Mir Jafar and the elevation in his stead of Kasim to the masnad of Bengal.

Carnac was ordered to proceed to Patna, which he reached in January 1761 and took command of the troops. The Mughal Emperor had been still in Behar and exerted his influence to collect men with the aim of recovering that part of the country for the Crown of Delhi. Ever since the assassination of Shiraj-ud--daula the English had to fight almost every year the Great Mughal—at first as Crown Prince, but afterwards the real monarch of Delhi. The revolution, which was very unpopular with almost every class in Bengal, was driving zemindars and peasants to rally round the standard of the Mughal Emperor. So it was considered necessary by the English to attack him without delay. In the words of Mill :

"The province of Behar had suffered so much from the repeated incursions of the Emperor ; and the finances both of the Nabob and of the Company were so much exhausted by the expenses of the army required to oppose him, that the importance was .strongly felt of driving him finally from that part of the country. The rains were no sooner at an end than the English Commander, accompanied by the troops of Ramnarain, and those which had belonged to Meeran, advanced towards the Emperor, who was stationed at Gyah Maunpore. The unhappy monarch made what exertions he could to increase his feeble army ; but Carnac reached his camp by three day's march ; forced him to an engagement, and gained a victory."†

The terms upon which peace was concluded with the Emperor will be presently narrated. But it is necessary to mention the internal disturbances which had to be quelled almost at the same time when they had to fight the Mughal monarch. The Rajas of Burdwan and Birbhum rose up in arms against the new Nawab. It is alleged that they did so in concert with the Mughal Emperor, because they were averse to the recent revolution in Bengal—and one of them, at least, the Raja of Burdwan, being bound hand and foot together and delivered to the tender mercies of the English. That chief and his tenants had been plundered and ill-treated by the Marathas as well as the Sepoys serving under the English. Raja Tilak Chand of Burdwan in his letter of August 1760 to the authorities of Calcutta wrote :

"How can I relate to you the present deplorable situation of this place ? Three months the Mahrattas remained here, burning, plundering and laying waste the whole country, but now, thank

* First Report, 772, p. 164

† Vol. III, p. 218.

God, they are all gone, but the inhabitants are not yet returned. The inhabitants have lost almost all they were worth......

"It has been my bad fortune to have my country burned, plundered and destroyed by the Mahrattas, which is the reason that there is now a balance due to the Company; and to reinstate my country again must be attended with great difficulties, which gives me much uneasiness."*

Regarding the Telinga Sepoys plundering Burdwan ryots, Raja Tilak Chand wrote to Calcutta, presumably in September, 1760:

"A number of Telingees are gone into the pergannahs of Mundulghaut, Monkore, Juhanabaud, Chitwar, Bursat, Balghurry, Chomahaw and other places and have plundered the inhabitants and otherwise ill-treated them to the danger of their lives and which has obliged them to run away, and detrimented the places to the amount of 2 or 3 lacs of rupees. I am sensible this is not your intention, but where the Telingees went they have beat the inhabitants, your placing a camp in the roads was necessary, and they had no occasion to go to the villages, and therefore desire you will write to the officer there to recall the Telingees from the villages, that the inhabitants may be free from their ill-treatment.', †

But the Telingas continued plundering. So Raja Tilak Chand wrote again that

"the ryots, from the behaviour of the Telingees, suffer greatly and are obliged to leave their habitations. From this a considernble loss will accrue." §

Raja Tilak Chand seemed to have spoken to deaf ears. There is nothing to show that the Telinga sepoys were adequately punished for their transgressions.

The Birbhum Raja was also giving trouble to the Zemindar and ryots of Burdwan. Raja Tilak Chand wrote to Calcutta in September 1760:

"How can I describe the ill-treatment of the Beerbhoom Rajah, the pergunnahs of Sherugur, Sunpany, Gauller, Boon, Armatshy, Mosufershy, Morahershy are ruined, and it is at your pleasure to get me redress. What more can I write?"**

But the Burdwan Raja did not get any redress from the Calcutta authorities. So when on the elevation of Kasim to the masnad of Bengal, his territory was handed over to the Company, he did not certainly hail it with delight. It must have appeared to him that he was going to be placed under King Stork. So he was driven to revolt. He commenced raising troops,†† entered into a league even with his enemy, the Raja of Birbhum §§ and was declared by Kasim in November 1760 to be in revolt,*** who wrote to Calcutta:

" I hear from Burdwan that the Zemindar intends to fight, and that he has collected together 10 or 15 thousand peons and robbers and taken them into pay and joined the Beerbhoom Rajah. Since this I am preparing speedily to send 2 or 3 thousand horsemen, and 5 or 6 thousand peons to chastise the Beerboom Rajah."

* Long's *Selections*, p. 233.
† *Ibid.*, p. 236.
§ *Ibid.*, p. 236-37.
** *Ibid.*, p. 238.
†† *Ibid.*, p. 238, No. 504.
§§ *Ibid.*, p. 238, No. 506.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 239 No. 507.

The Calcutta authorities asked the Raja of Burdwan to come to Calcutta to settle the concerns of the district. But he

"absconded with his family through fear of being compelled to give up his country."*

Proper persons were sent to endeavour to convince him of the good intentions of the English towards him, esteeming lenient methods the properest on their first entering upon those lands. However, the Calcutta authorities sent troops under the command of Captain White to take

"possession for the Company of the countries of Burdwan and Midnapore, and this is to be done if possible without hostilities."

He was instructed to

"wait at Hoogly . . . .if the Rajah does not submit," he "will proceed to Amboa in order to march from thence to Burdwan, but if he should come to terms, ..." he "will then march directly from thence to Midnapore."†

Captain White's march on Burdwan was accompanied with much bloodshed of and oppression on the poor inhabitants of the country. This is evident from the letter of Raja Tilak Chand written to Calcutta in January 1761.§

The Raja of Burdwan, that of Birbhum and the Marathas united to oppose the the Nawab and the English.** In fact they made a common cause, for there was an identity of interests.

Captain White fought a battle with the Burdwan Raja on the 28th December 1760.†† A detachment of troops under Major Yorke took possession of Nagore, the capital of Birbhum, the Raja having abandoned it, and gone with the utmost expedition to the hills.

There is strong ground to believe that the union of the Rajas of Burdwan and the Marathas to oppose the Nawab and the English was brought about by Nanda Kumar Roy. He was a real patriot and a far-seeing statesman. His private life was above reproach and the only blot that ever tarnished the reputation of his public career was when as Foujdar of Hugli under Shiraj-ud-daula he gave passage to the British in 1757 to attack Chandernagar without fighting them. Of course it was a fatal error. But he did not know the English then so well as he came to know them afterwards and it was Amir Chand by whose persuasion he was made to betray the interests of his master Shiraj-ud-daula.

Nanda Kumar saw his country sold to the English and the Nawab made a mere puppet in their hands. It was high time to check their progress, and so he strained every nerve to coalesce the native powers that then existed under the standard of the Mughal Emperor of Delhi and oppose the further extension of the British power. Everything being considered fair in love and war, the means which he used to bring

* *Ibid.*, p. 248, No. 533.

† *Ibid.*, p. 249, No. 534.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 250, No. 539.

** *Ibid.*, p. 250, No. 537.

†† *Ibid.*, p. 260-262

about his desired result, although not commendable, should not be condemned. The Nawab wrote to Calcutta, on the 24th February 1761 :

"I have before wrote your Excellency concerning the contents of the letters, I had intercepted of Nuncoomar's, that he had carried on a correspondence with our enemies ; that I had made him prisoner and was examining his papers. On an examination thereof I find that he corresponded with the Shahzadah's people, Coingar Khan and Sree Bhut ; Nuncoomar has also endeavoured to detriment the affairs of your Sirkar and the Company's. He is therefore undoubtedly culpable, and had it been of such a nature as to come under the tenor of our laws, he would not have escaped unpunished."*

History does not brand the name of Nand Kumar as a traitor, but regards him as a patriot and a real statesman.

As said before, the Emperor of Dehli was defeated in the battle fought by Carnac. Shuja-ud-daula, the Nawab of Oudh, who was with him, left immediately after the defeat. Carnac sent Rajah Shitab Roy as his envoy to the Emperor to make an overture of peace on favourable terms. But the Raja came back disappointed, for the Emperor did not desire to make peace with the English on the terms proposed. However, when he was deserted by the Nawab of Oudh and other noted chiefs, he found himself in a fix and to extricate himself from this position there was no other alternative left to him than to accept the terms offered to him by the English. He did this and came to the camp of Carnac, by whom he was conducted to Patna, where Mir Kasim had also arrived.

The year 1761 was not yet a week old when occurred an event the importance of which in greatly contributing to establish the British supremacy in this country has not been sufficiently laid stress upon by writers of Indian history. That event was the battle fought at Panipat on the 6th January, 1761. It is not necessary to mention in detail all the circumstances and causes which brought about the battle. It is sufficient for our purpose to state here that both the parties to this battle were highlanders—one of the North beyond the Indus, which used to be considered the geographical boundary of India proper, and the other of the South belonging to that race which came into prominence owing principally to the military genius of him whom Aurangzebe contemptuously nicknamed "the mountain rat." The Afghans and the Marathas were both highlanders and the guerilla mode of warfare was natural to both. A pitched battle on the plains of India was quite foreign to the native genius of both the parties. However, it was fought with tremendous losses to both. The Afghans were brought to the battle under the leadership of their monarch Ahmed Shah Abdali. He was a remarkable man—the first of his race to unite the different clans of the Afghans, given to cutting each other's throat, and to try to form them into a nation. He had learnt the military art and system of administration at the feet of his master Nadir Shah, whom he succeeded as ruler of Afghanistan in 1747. When he became the King of the Afghans, the condition of India was such that it tempted every adventurer, whether foreign or indigenous, to try his fortune there.

Ibid., p. 757, No. 552.

"In India the Moguls, who had never been the undisputed masters of the peninsula, never recovered from the sack of Delhi. The news of that great calamity went sounding the tale of their weakness through the land, confirming chiefs, like the Wazir of Oudh and Nizam-ul-Mulk, in their usurpations, encouraging a multitude of petty commanders to assume independence, and converting the growth of the Mahratta power, for a time, into the national cause of the Hindus against their Muhammadan oppressors. Nadir's retreat left the Mahrattas battling for dominion in the Deccan with the Nizam, while farther to the south the Viceroy of the Carnatic was independent; and there was a grand medley of war, in which French, English, Mahrattas, and Deccanese, fought and intrigued with unflagging energy, prompted by the most jealous ambition. In Bengal the Viceroy Allahvardi Khan was fast rising into a power. Nearer Delhi the Jats were waiting for an opportunity to extend their infant state of Bhurtpore on the one side, whilst on the other the Rohillas were laying the foundations of the principality of Rampore."*

Ahmed Shah saw his opportunity and meditated invasion of India. This he did, for,

"The Government which insisted on all swords being sheathed at home, was bound to find employment abroad, and this necessity was recognized by the tribes as a chief part of the national policy."†

In India the Marathas were daily growing into power and they had extended their influence into the very heart of the Empire. Ahmad Shah, with the eyes of a political seer, saw that if the Marathas were not checked in their course of military conquests, India would no longer remain a Muhammadan State but would be reconverted into a Hindu Kingdom. Before the fighting of the famous battle of Panipat,

"He sent messengers to the Rohilla chiefs and to the Nawab of Oudh, and laboured to make them realise the conviction forced upon his own mind, that the great fight before them would be a battle of the Muslim against the Hindu, a fight of races and of religions, such as had not been known since the days when Mahmud of Ghazni laid the foundations of the Muhammadan power by the annexation of the Punjab."§

It was then with the avowed object of curbing the growing power of the Marathas and recognizing the Mughal Emperor of Delhi as the real sovereign of all India that Ahmad Shah undertook his expedition to India, which culminated in the memorable battle at Panipat.

At Delhi, Ghaziuddin, who on the death of Safdar Jang, the Nawab of Oudh, assumed the title of Vazir, had blinded the Emperor and raised a child to the throne by the title of Alamgir II, passing over the true heir of the Empire, Prince Ali Gauhar, afterwards known as Shah Alam. This prince was fighting the English in Behar.

Ghaziuddin was not strong enough to maintain his position and influence at Dehli without the Marathas, whose aid he called in.** The Marathas very cheerfully responded to his call and Raghunath Rao, the brother of the Peshwa, came to his aid, bringing with him a large contingent of his fellow-countrymen from the South. At the request of Adina Beg, who was Ahmad Shah's Governor of Lahore, Raghunath Rao undertook the conquest of the Panjab, which he effected very easily. But it was this very conquest which was fatal to the Marathas. It did not bring in to them any gain in money or

* *Calcutta Review*, Vol. LI, pp. 6-7.

† *Ibid.*, p. 13.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

** See Brajendranath Banerji's paper on "Some Information relating to the Last Days of Ghazi-ud-din Khan, Imad-ul-Mulk" in *Bengal : Past and Present*, Vol. XXXVII, Pt. II.

plunder but made them losers to the extent of 80 lakhs of rupees and excited the wrath of Ahmad Shah, who, to recover his province and chastise the Marathas, set out on his expedition to India in 1759.

When Raghunath Rao returned to the Deccan, he was not hailed as a conquering hero, but reprimanded for causing a loss to the Peshwa's treasury to the tune of 80 lakhs. Raghunath or Raghoba, as he was familiarly called, was always an unfortunate and short-sighted man. He took umbrage at the treatment he received on his return from the North. So when Ahmad Shah invaded Hindustan, he refused to take command of the Maratha troops and proceed to Hindustan to oppose him. This duty had, therefore, to be performed by some one else. The person selected for this task was a cousin of the reigning Peshwa, by name Sadasheo Bhow, to whose care was confided the Peshwa's son Viswas Rao.

The Bhow marched out of the Deccan at the head of thirty thousand men in the finest condition and splendidly equipped. Of this twenty-thousand were cavalry and ten thousand artillery and infantry. The latter two arms of the service were trained upon European pattern and commanded by Ibrahim Khan Gardi (? Garde), an old follower of M. Bussy.

The number of this Maratha force went on inceasing as it proceeded to the north. Not only Holkar and Sindhia, the two most prominent members of the Maratha confederacy, joined with their very respectable armies, but Rajput princes also sent bodies of cavalry and the Jat ruler of Bharatpur appeared in person with 30,000 men. According to the author of the History of the Marathas,

"It seemed the national cause with all Hindoos."

But to the incapacity of the commandant Bhow should be attributed the failure of this expedition. According to one Kasi Raja Pandit, who was present at the battle of Panipat and an account of which he wrote in Persian :

"The army under his command was very numerous, and they set out on their expedition without delay ; but, as soon as they had passed the Nerbudda, the Bhow began to exercise his authority in a new and offensive manner, and both in settling the accounts of the army and revenue, and in all public business he showed a capricious and self-conceited conduct. He totally excluded from his council Mulhar Row, and all the other chiefs who were experienced in the affairs of Hindostan, and who had credit and influence with the principal people in that country, and carried on everything by his own opinion alone."

The Maratha army was encumbered with heavy and useless baggages, women, children and followers. This was a great mistake.

The Bhow alienated the feelings of his Muhammadan allies by his conduct at Delhi. When entering the castle there with Viswas Row, he

"seized upon a great part of the royal effects that he found there, especially the ceiling of the great hall of audience, which was of silver, and made at an immense expense, was pulled down, and coined into seventeen lacks of rupees. Many other actions of the same kind were done."

It is mentioned by the same author from whose writings the above extracts are given, that it was the intention of the Bhow to place Viswas Row upon the throne of Delhi

All these indiscreet acts of the Bhow offended the susceptibilities of the Muhammadans. The Nawab, who had relied on the Maratha support for the maintenance of his position, did not and could not join the cause of the Bhow with that enthusiasm which, under other circumstances, he would have most readily done.

The position of the Bhow then was by no means an enviable one—he had offended the principal members of the Maratha Confederacy, also the Jat Prince and the Muhammadan allies. He was encumbered with heavy baggages, women and children and useless camp followers. The men who composed his army were of the south and not inured to the climate of the north of India. So any one could easily foresee the result of the battle which he was to fight with the Afghan monarch.

The battle was fought on the 6th of January, 1761. The Jat Prince with his army had given the slip to the Marathas. Holkar remained inactive and the Nawab of Oudh played the part of a traitor to the Bhow. Consequently, the fate of the Marathas was sealed. They were defeated with great slaughter. Their leader and the heir-apparent to the Peshwaship were among the slain.

But Ahmad Shah also purchased the victory very dearly. His casualties were also so heavy, that he could not take full advantage of the victory by pursuing the vanquished, and extending his influence to other provinces beyond Delhi. He had soon after to return to his native country. He was the last of the Muhammadan invaders of India, and the battle of Panipat was the last victory gained by the followers of the Crescent on the Indian soil.

Professor Sydney Owen in concluding his interesting work on "India on the eve of the British Conquest" truly observed :

"With the battle of Paniput, the native period of Indian History may be said to end. Henceforth the interest gathers round the progress of the Merchant Princes from the far West."

This battle contributed more largely and effectively to the rise of the political supremacy of the English in India than anything else. It broke the back of the Marathas, who became henceforth unable to extend their influence to Bengal, where the British were slowly gathering their strength. It also prevented the Afghans from again invading India. Thus two of the nations who were in the field for wresting the sceptre of India from the feeble grasp of the Mughal Emperors of India were, as it were, driven out of it, of which the British began gradually to assert themselves as the undisputed masters.

After this little digression we must go back and take up the thread of the narrative we have dropped. The Mughal Emperor was a fugitive in Behar. In his own capital Ghaziuddin had passed him over and seated on the throne an infant. But Ahmad Shah recognized him as the legitimate Musalman sovereign of India, and dismissing Ghaziuddin, appointed Shuja-ud-daula, the Nawab of Oudh, as the Vazir of the Empire. So the Emperor was anxious to return to Delhi. In recognition of the hospitality and good treatment he had received at the hands of the English, he offered the Dewani of Bengal, Behar and Orissa to the Company, but at this time it was not convenient for the Company to accept such a responsibility. So Major Carnac was instructed to decline the offer.

The Emperor was anxious for the English to conduct him to Delhi, but this the calculating Christian merchants declined to do. Vansittart and other members of the Board at Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors in London :

"The first thing that occurs under the head of Country Powers is the Proclamation of Shah Alam (formerly known by the name of the Shahzada) as King of Delhi. He remained at Patna till the beginning of June [1761], and was extremely desirous of having a body of English forces accompanying him to his capital ; but as we were uncertain of Colonel Coote's regiment coming down from the coast and the security of your possessions in Bengal was first to be regarded, we found it impossible to spare a sufficient detachment for undertaking so distant and so important a service. The king, therefore, being pressed by his relations at Delhi to proceed thither with all expedition, and Shuja-ud-daula, the Nawab of Oude, whom he has appointed his Vizier, having advanced to the borders of his province to meet him, he determined not to wait longer for our assistance. The Nawab Meer Cassim supplied him with considerable sums of money during his residence at Patna, and at the time of his departure caused Sicca Rupees to be struck in his name throughout these provinces ; of which having advised the President, it was agreed that the Siccas in the name of Shah Alam should also be struck in our mint on the 15th of July, which was accordingly done, the usual notice being first given. Shah Alam is not, however, as yet generally acknowledged. The late Vizier [at Delhi] has engaged some of the Chiefs of the Empire in his party, and has formed a considerable army to oppose the King and Shuja-ud-daula on their way to Delhi. . . .

"We hope, however, that none of the contending parties will return this way, and that Bengal will continue to enjoy a state of tranquility."*

Mir Kasim agreed to pay the King an annual tribute of twenty-four lakhs as the imperial share of the revenue of the three provinces, and so he secured the letters of investiture from the King, whose name was still held in profound respect throughout Hindustan and whose sign manual sufficed for the grant of the provinces.

The Calcutta authorities, hearing of the Nawab getting letters of investiture for the three provinces from the King, followed his example. They expected to secure the letters of investiture from the King without paying anything for the same. But the King refused to grant the letters unless a proper tribute was remitted to the Imperial Treasury.

Foreign aggression being repelled and internal insurrections crushed, the Nawab had to deal with the English, whether his professed friends or declared enemies. He had been placed on the masnad of Bengal not by the unanimous voice of all the members of the Select Committee but by the conspiracy of the majority of its members, the remaining not having been even consulted as to the measure. The money that had been extorted from him was not distributed among all the members but only among five. So those members who had not been pecuniarily benefited by the Revolution, did not naturally look upon it with favour. They, therefore, found nothing good in the administration of Mir Kasim. They addressed a letter, dated Fort William, 11th March 1762, to the Court of Directors, in which they violently attacked Mir Kasim's administration and also those who had conspired to place him on the throne of Bengal. The letter is a very long one and a few extracts only can be reproduced from it here. They wrote :

* Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, pp. 275—276.

"Since his accession to the subadaree, we could produce to you numberless instances of his extortions and cruelties, but that it would run us into an exorbitant length ; and he seems to have made the more immediate objects of his ill-usage, those who had been the most avowed friends of the English. We shall only particularize *Ramnarain,* whom he dispossessed of the Naibship of *Patna,* in which it was always thought *sound policy in us to support him, on account of* his approved faith ; and he now keeps him in irons till he has been fleeced to the utmost, when there is no doubt he will be dispatched ; most, if not all those who espoused the English interest, have been laid under the heaviest contributions, and many have died under the force of the torture to exact money from them ; others have been either basely murdered, or, (which is a common practice amongst Gentoos) unable to survive the loss of honour, have made away with themselves."

The manner in which Ram Narain was handed over to the tender mercies of Mir Kasim is a great blot on the character of the English who managed the affairs of the Company at Calcutta. Major Carnac refused to obey the orders of the Calcutta authorities and deliver Ram Narain to the Nawab. It was said that Ram Narain was in arrear to the Nawab. Carnac in his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons of 1772 said :

"Ram Narain was a very able man, but very avaricious, and he had the credit of being very wealthy, which was motive sufficient for Cossim Ally Khan to wish to have him in his power. He was always an object of jealousy of the Nabob's, and even Meer Jaffer wished to have had hold of his treasures ; however, my Lord Clive had secured him from any injustice of that nature, and it was deemed a proper point of policy to support Ram Narain, and the first orders I received after the victory over the Shawzadda were to maintain the engagements which had been observed in Lord Clive's time, with respect to protecting Ram Narain from any violence or injustice on the part of the Nabob. The plea of his being in arrear was the pretext always made use of for oppressing him but without foundation ; for in the frequent conversations I had with Ram Narain on the subject, he always seemed ready to come to a fair and equitable account. The Governor and Council thought proper afterwards to give me contrary directions respecting that unfortunate man. There stands upon the Company's records a letter from me to the Board, showing the contrariety of their orders, and an absolute refusal, while I was at the head of their forces, of doing so dishonorable an act, as delivering up this man to his enemy."

For disobeying the orders of the Calcutta authorities, Carnac was superseded by Colonel Coote, who had returned from the Coromandel Coast. But Coote also refused to deliver Ram Narain to the Nawab. In his evidence before the above-mentioned Committee, Coote said that

"The Nabob. . . . . . . .turned his thoughts entirely towards the seizing of Ram Narain, for which, if I would give him up, he offered me seven lack and a half of rupees, and whatever I pleased to the gentlemen of my family ; this I communicated, by letter, to the Governor and Council of 17th July 1761. The Nabob finding he could not gain his point, with regard to Ram Narain, then thought it necessary to write the Governor, Mr. Vansittart, the most scandalous invectives, and false accusations against me. . . . ."

The Governor, Vansittart, removed both Carnac and Coote from Patna, and so Ram Narain fell into the hands of the Nawab. It is not improbable that Vansittart and those who sided with him consented to deliver Ram Narain to the Nawab owing to the latter offering them a very heavy bribe. Mill writes :

"This was the fatal error of Mr. Vansittart's administration : because it extinguished among the rank all confidence in the English protection ; and because the enormity to which, in this

nstance, he had lent his support, created an opinion of a corrupt partiality, and diminished the weight of his interference when the Nawab was really the party aggrieved." *

Regarding Vansittart, Amyatt and others wrote in the letter to the Court of Directors dated 11th March 1762, a letter which has already been referred to above:

"It is very natural for any person who takes an uncommon step, to endeavour to vindicate himself by the most specious arguments, and the most plausible reasoning he can devise, and nothing less could be expected from Mr. Vansittart after having brought about so unprecedented a revolution. He has told his story with all the aggravations the nature of it would admit; notwithstanding which, we do not imagine the reasons he has given in support of so violent a measure, will prove satisfactory to the world. He takes great pains to blacken Meer Jaffer's character, in order to prejudice men's minds against him, and lays great stress upon the scarcity of grain in the City; but we apprehend Mr. Vansittart does not judge so harshly from that circumstance, after what he has himself experienced last year: for, notwithstanding all the care we are not to doubt he has taken, grain was never so scarce in Calcutta before, in so much that numbers daily perished."

The signatories to the above letter then proceeded to describe the unpopularity of the Revolution. They wrote:

"So bad an impression of us did the Revolution create in the minds of the country people, that the Burdwan Rajah, who, in Jaffier Ally Cawn's time, had often expressed his earnest desire that the Company might continue to collect the revenues of his district, as they had all along done on account of the Tunckaws, and that they would procure the Zemindary for themselves from the Nabob; yet after the breach of our faith to the old Nabob, concluding no reliance was to be placed on our engagements, he immediately flew off from his former declarations, and instead of acquiescing under our government, he began to act in open rebellion, he stopped our trade, raised a large force, invited the *Morattas* into his country, withheld the payment of his revenues, and acting in conjunction with the Beerbhoom Rajah, he espoused the cause of the Shah Zadah, with whom he entered into correspondence.......

"The Nabob's troops were rendered quite mutinous by the news of the Revolution........"

They very truly observed:

"If the Nabob had purchased the power he is invested with, it is to be expected he will of course make the most of it, by extorting money from his subjects, and oppressing every province as much as he can; and as the fate of *Jaffer Ally Chan* must have convinced him how little we regard the most sacred engagements, he will of necessity endeavour to establish himself on a foundation less precarious than the friendship of the English. That he already begins to do so is evident from his still increasing the number of his troops (notwithstanding the present tranquility) and to render them the more formidable, he is arming and disciplining as many sepoys as he can procure in the European manner; and to secure himself as much as possible from us, esteeming his Capital, Morshedabad (the scene of his predecessor's fall) too near our Settlements, he is about erecting a large fort at Rajamaul, which he proposes to make his place of residence, where he hopes to be out of our reach.

"When any member of the Board suggests that the Nabob's behaviour argues a suspicion of us,.... it is replied: 'The Nabob is master of his country, and being independent of us, is at liberty to rule and act as he pleases'. But surely *Cassim Ally Chan* cannot be more so than his predecessor was; and if it be true that the Nabob of Bengal is independent of the English, and master of his own actions, how can the gentlemen justify their proceedings against *Mir Jaffer*, whom they called to so

Vol. III, p. 224.

severe an account, for the administration of his own government, as to depose him, though he had not been guilty of any offence to our nation, nor ever deviated from his treaty ?"

Then they referred to the want of confidence of the Mughal Emperor in Kassim Ali :

"His Majesty, before his departure, gave the most unquestionable proof of his hatred to *Cassim Ally Khan*, of his esteem for the *English*, by the voluntary offer he made them of the Dewany of Bengal. This post is the collection of the revenues of all the provinces subject to the Nabob, which are to be accounted for with the Court of Delhi. It differs from the Subadaree; the latter being the command of the troops, and the charge of the jurisdiction in the provinces; the expenses whereof are paid out of the revenues by the Dewan...... From the nature of the office it is evident that the King, distrusting the Nabob, intended that we should be a check upon him, and be answerable for the revenue,.....

Such was the tenor of the letter signed by Eyre Coote, P. Amyatt, John Carnac, W. Ellis, S. Batson and H. Verelst. They were, of course, all declared enemies of Mir Kasim and so never left a stone unturned to blacken his character.

But those Englishmen who professed themselves to be his friends were so from no other motive than that of fleecing him. They tried to take undue advantages of him, for, being primarily a nation of shopkeepers and as worshippers of Mammon, they were attracted to India by saint-seducing gold. By means of trade they meant to enrich themselves. In this country, under its native rulers, the transit of goods was subject to duties. The English Company had secured by farman exemption from these duties. But this did not extend to the private trade of the servants of the Company, who, it should be remembered, were allowed to indulge in trade and speculations in those days. The servants of the Company had to pay the same duties as the subjects of the Nawab. But on the elevation of Mir Kasim to the throne of Bengal, the servants of the Company tried to evade the payment of the duties on the private trade which they carried on, and apply the Company's passport to protect their private trade in every part of the country. In the words of Mill:

"The Company's servants, whose goods were thus conveyed entirely free from duty, while those of all other merchants were heavily burdened, were rapidly getting into their own hands the whole trade of the country, and thus drying up one of the sources of the public revenue. When the collectors of these tolls, or transit duties, questioned the power of the dustuck, and stopped the goods, it was customary to send a party of sepoys to seize the offender and carry him prisoner to the nearest factory."*

The enormities arising from this private trade were borne testimony to by many contemporary Englishmen. The opinions of some of them are reproduced below.

Thus Warren Hastings in a letter to the President, dated Bhagalpur, 25th April, 1762, wrote :

"I have been surprised to meet with several English flags flying in places which I have passed; .....By whatever title they have been assumed, I am sure their frequency can bode no good to the Nabob's revenues, the quiet of the country, or the honour of our nation......Many complaints againsh them (Sepoys) were made to me on the road; and most of the petty towns and serais were deserted at our approach and the shops shut up from the apprehensions of the same treatment from us."

Vol. III, pp. ??9-?90.

Verelst says :

"that a trade free from duties had been claimed by the Company's servants, supported by their forces, and established by the last treaty with Mir Jaffer ;, ...At this time many black merchants found it expedient to purchase the name of any young writer, in the Company's Service, by loans of money, and under this sanction harassed and oppressed the natives. So plentiful a supply was derived from this source that many young writers were enabled to spend £1500 and £2000 per annum, were clothed in fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."

Again, he says :

"A trade was carried on without payment of duties, in the prosecution of which infinite oppressions were committed. . . . . . , This was the immediate cause of the war with Mir Kassim."*

The Court of Directors also condemned the inland trade as it was then carried on by their servants in Bengal. In their letter dated the 8th February 1764 to the President and Council of Bengal, they wrote :

"One grand source of the disputes, misunderstandings, and difficulties, which have occurred with the country government, appears evidently to have taken its rise from the unwarrantable and licentious manner of carrying on the private trade by the Company's servants, their gomastahs, agents, and others, to the prejudice of the Soubah, both with respect to his authority and the revenues justly due to him ; their diverting and taking from his natural subjects the trade in the inland parts of the country, to which neither we nor any persons whatsoever dependent upon us, or under our protection, have any manner of right, and consequently endangering the Company's very valuable privileges. In order therefore to remedy all these disorders, we do hereby positively order and direct,

'That from the receipt of this letter, a final and effectual end be forthwith put to the inland trade in salt, betel-nut, tobacco, and in all other articles whatsoever produced and consumed in the country : and that all European and other agents or gomastahs, who have been concerned in such trade be immediately ordered down to Calcutta, and not suffered to return or be replaced as such by any other persons."

Of course, the Court of Directors took a very just and sensible view of the case, but their orders were not obeyed by the Calcutta British authorities. It is not unreasonable to presume that the private trade of the Company's servants in Bengal so injured the trade of the natives of that province that they have been backward in commerce ever since, at least partly, for that reason.

William Ellis was appointed the Provincial Chief of the Company's factory at Patna. He was a man of very violent temper and a declared enemy of the Nawab as well as the Governor Vansittart. He never let an opportunity pass without insulting the Nawab or trying to set his authority at naught. He was the direct cause of most of the troubles, ill feelings, and misunderstandings between the Nawab and the Company. Vansittart † has described some of the instances of the ill treatment which the Nawab received at the hands of Ellis.

It is not necessary to refer to the other disputes of Ellis with the Nawab except those relating to the Inland Trade. In a letter dated Patna the 7th October 1762, Ellis wrote to Mr. Vansittart and the Council of Calcutta that

"To prevent any blame being thereafter thrown on us, for the deficiency of our investment, we

* View of Bengal, pp. 8 and 46.

† *Narrative*, Vol. I, pp. 300-314 and 323 ; also 326 to the end, and Vol. II, 1-11,

are now to inform you, that at *Johannabad*, the principal cloth Aurung, our Gomasthas, Dellols, &c., have been peremptorily ordered to desist from purchasing, and to quit the place. Upon their non-compliance, they have been threatened and abused in the most vile and gross terms, and the washermen employed in whitening our cloths have been actually beat, and peons put on them to prevent their going on in their business.

"*Rajah Nobut Roy* (to whom the Chief has twice complained of these proceedings) declares, that the person (Peru Roy) who thus insults us, and impedes the Company's business, is independent of him, so that it would seem he is sent by the Nabob merely for this purpose.

"If such insolence is suffered to pass unnoticed, we can have no hopes of completing our investment; for who will serve us, whilst they thereby subject themselves to such severe and ignominious treatment from the country Government ?

"For the carrying on the Company's business, 'tis evident, we must be obliged to repel force by force, and shall do so, unles we receive your honour &c. orders to the contrary."

Ellis was an unscrupulous man and possessed a very violent temper. No sooner was his letter received than the Calcutta authorities in a letter, dated Fort William, 16th October, 1762, wrote to him :

"This instant we have received your letter of the 7th ; and inclose a letter from the President to the Nabob, on the subject of your complaint, and hope it will be effectual in removing all interruption in the Company's business.—But, at all events, as we have it sufficiently in our power to procure satisfaction for any injury that may be done to the interests of our employers, you are on no account to make use of force, without our express directions. You do not mention, in your letter, that you made any application to the Nabob to put a stop to the difficulties you represent, and which certainly you ought to have done, when you was informed, that the person you complain of was independent of the Naib of Patna ; at least, is should have occurred to you, that such application was necessary, before you should propose to make use of force."

Complaints were also received at Calcutta from the chiefs of the Company's factories at Lakhipur and Dacca of the English boats being stopped and duties levied on them, which threatened to occasion an entire stoppage of their trade.*

The Nawab's officers, servants and subjects had been ill treated by the orders of the English traders. Vansittart publishes the following letter to the Nawab from one of his offcers dated Backergunj, May 25, 1762 :

"My instructions which I brought here were, that in case any Europeans or their servants committed any disorders, they were to be sent to Calcutta,.......... Notwithstanding the rigour of these orders, I have ever made it my business to endeavour, by gentle means, to persuade the gentlemen's gomasthas here to act in a peaceable manner ; which, although repeated several times, has had no effect ;..........This place was of great trade formerly, but is now brought to nothing by the following practices. A gentleman sends a gomastah here to buy or sell. He immediately looks upon himself as sufficient to force every inhabitant, either to buy his goods or sell him theirs, and on refusal, (in case of non-capacity) a flogging or confinement immediately ensues. This is not sufficient even when willing, but a second force is made use of, which is to engross the different branches of trade to themselves, and not to suffer any persons to buy or sell the articles they trade in ;..........and again, what things they purchase, they think the least they can do is, to take them for a considerable deal less than another merchant, and often time refuse paying that, and my interfering occasions an immediate complaint." †

* Third Report, 1773, pp. 335-336.

† *Narrative*, ii. 112.

The enormities arising from the Inland Trade were very eloquently described by Burke in his speech on the impeachment of Warren Hastings.

"Commerce, which enriches every other country in the world, was bringing Bengal to total ruin. The Company, in former times, when it had no sovereignty or power in the country, had large privileges under their dustuck or permit ; their goods passed without paying duties through the country. The servants of the Company made use of this dustuck for their own private trade, which, while it was used with moderation, the native government winked at in some degree ; but when it got wholly into private hands, it was more like robbery than trade. These traders appeared everywhere ; they sold at their own prices and forced the people to sell to them at their own prices also. It appeared more like an army going to pillage the people, under pretence of commerce, than anything else. In vain the people claimed the protection of their own country courts. This English army of traders, in their march, ravaged worse than a Tartarian Conqueror. The trade they carried on, and which more resembled robbery than commerce, anticipated the resources of the tyrant, and threatened to leave him no materials for imposition or confiscation. Thus this miserable country was torn to pieces by the horrible rapaciousness of a double tyranny."

Such were the enormities of the Inland Trade in which the Christian servants of the Company indulged.

Ellis's letter of the 7th October 1762, as said before, was forwarded to the Nawab, whose reply to it, dated 1st November, was received by the Governor on the 8th November, 1762. The Nawab wrote :

"Sir, whenever that gentleman [Mr. Ellis] has an opportunity, he fails not to make complaints of his business. As he has found my officers in no instance faulty, he has wrote to you the impertinencies and complaints of the washermen. You well know, sir, that the washermen pay no duties, and that the aumils have no authority to interrupt them, or prevent their washing and dressing the cloths : Was this affair really true, he would have informed *Rajah Nobitroy* of it, and he would immediately have wrote to the Aumil about it ; but as it is altogether without foundation he chose to make a false complaint to you. Do you, yourself, sir, consider this affair. Nevertheless I have sent strict orders to the Rajah, to write to the Aumil, that he on no account obstruct the currency of the Company's business ; and that, on application from the Gomasthas of the Factory, he afford them due aid and assistance.''

Serious was the charge which the Nawab preferred against Ellis. That Englishman should have been at once removed from the chiefship of the factory at Patna. But perhaps it was the policy of the Calcutta authorities to keep Ellis at Patna in order to provoke hostilities with the Nawab and then get a pretext to proceed against the Nawab and bring about another revolution which would in every way be beneficial to them.

So far the Nawab showed a strong desire to remain on terms of peace with the British. It was the latter who had assumed the aggressive attitude towards him. However, Vansittart and Hastings, who had been immensely benefited by the Nawab whom they had set up and so consequently who was their creature, were desirous to prevent a rupture with him. So they prevailed on the Council, of which at that time only four members were present at Calcutta, to send them to the Nawab and endeavour to bring about an adjustment. Accordingly they set out for Munger, were they arrived on the 30th November, 1762. Vansittart was under the impression that the Council had fully authorised him to settle with Mir Kasim the terms of an amicable arrangement

and so he entered upon the business with him. In his letter of the 1st December, 1762, *i.e.*, the day following his arrival at Patna, Vansittart wrote to P. Amyatt and the rest of the gentlemen of the Council at Fort William that he had found the Nawab in the disposition he wished and expected, "very desirous of having our respective pretensions equitably discussed and just regulations made to prevent disputes in future."

A fortnight later, that is on the 1st December, a Treaty, known as the Munger Treaty, was signed by the Nawab and by Vansittart and Warren Hastings on the part of the Company. This Treaty consisted of nine articles and it must be admitted that the Nawab tried to be fair and just to the English. Vansittart and Hastings in their letter of the 15th December 1762 to the Calcutta Council, enclosing a copy of the Munger Treaty, wrote:

"We have had many conferences with the Nawab, on the subject of the late complaints, which appear to have been chiefly occasioned by the private Inland trade, or the trade from place to place, in the country. He enlarged much on the licentiousness and oppressions exercised by our gomastas,.........He argued that the trade of those parts consisted chiefly in articles produced and sold in the country, from which former Nawabs had always restrained all Europeans, and to which he did not conceive that we would claim any right from our Firmann.

"We agree with the Nawab in opinion, that the true intent and natural meaning of the Firmann granted to the Company, was to give to them and their servants a free trade, clear of all customs, in all articles of commerce to be imported or exported by shipping. From such commerce a mutual benefit is derived to our country and to this; but the trade from place to place in the country, in salt, betel nut, tobacco and other commodities produced here, bringing no general benefit to the country, but to particulars only, who had the same in their hands, we do not think the Firmann can be understood to include them within the privilege of the Dustuck, or to grant us a right to trade therein, on any other footing than the natives themselves; that is, paying the usual customs to the Government; for if we had a right therein to trade custom-free, and the natives must pay, it follows, no one but ourselves could carry on any trade, which we can not suppose the firmann intended......

"We think it would be unreasonable to desire to carry on the Inland trade upon any other footing than that of the merchants of the country; and that the attempting to carry it on free of customs, and with the Company's dustuck, would bring upon us an universal jealousy and ill will and in the end prejudice the Company's affairs as well as our own. In the course of our conferences upon this subject, the Nawab observed, that if the English gomastas were permitted to trade in all parts and in all commodities custom free, as many of them now pretend, they must of course draw all the trade into their hands, and his customs would be of so little value to him, that it would be much more for his interest to lay trade entirely open, and collect no customs from any person whatever upon any kind of merchandise; which would draw a number of merchants into his country, and increase his revenues, by encouraging the cultivation and manufacture of a larger quantity of goods for sale; at the same time that (he added) it would effectually cut off the principal subject of disputes which had disturbed the good understanding between us; an object he had more than any other at heart. This scheme we discouraged all in our power, as it would immediately render the dustuck useless, and prejudice our honourable masters' business by enhancing the number of purchasers: and it is an argument why we ought readily to consent to the regulation now proposed, not to risk hurting Company's interests for our own private advantage."*

Appendix No. 32 to the Third Report, 1773, pp. 340-341.

But all these words of wisdom fell on deaf ears. The Anglo-Indians were determined to ruin the Indian merchants by drawing all the trade into their hands. The Nawab had agreed that English merchants should pay a duty of nine per cent. *ad valorem* to him on all articles of Inland trade, such as salt, tobacco and betel nut. This was, of course, much less than what the Indian merchants had to pay. Clive, in his speech, March 30, 1772, said :

"The natives paid infinitely more—and that this was no remedy to the grievance of which the Nabob complained."

The selfish English were not satisfied with the Treaty of Munger and the concessions made in their favor. They protested loudly against the treaty, and, ignoring its terms, tried to carry on their trade free as before. So the whole commerce of the country was thrown into confusion, and the Nawab's finances were threatened with ruin. As he had intimated to Vansittart and Hastings, he now, as a measure of justice to his own subjects, and to prevent the breaches of the peace which began to occur almost every day, abolished all customs in his dominions. Of course he had every right to do so. But this step of the Nawab also greatly offended the selfish English merchants. The Nawab was not to blame in the least, for he was all the time willing to come to amicable arrangements with the English. In his letter of 22nd February, 1763, the Nawab wrote to Vansittart :

"You write, that concerning the Inland Trade of this country (that is to say) salt, tobacco, betel-nut, dried fish, which being purchased in this country shall be carried for sale to other parts of the country, a duty of 9 per cent. was agreed between me and you to be paid ; but that the phousdars and managers do not regard it, but that they want to put a stop to the whole trade ; likewise, that they demand duties on cloth, &c., belonging to the Company, having a dustuck with the Company's seal, and which never was known to pay duties ; . . .

"The whole of the dispute is this. The merchants, &c., whose names are entered in my office, always pay duties. Now you purchase goods through their means ; therefore, the managers to the Government know not whether the goods belong to you or the merchant. Through the will of God, your Gomastahs and houses are everywhere ; therefore, why do not you purchase and sell goods through the means of your own Gomastahs, and your own houses ; and if the merchants were to have no share in it, no noise or dispute could possibly arise. Goods being purchased from the merchants, who always paid duties on the goods they bought and sold, and now do not, is the cause of these disputes. Therefore you will please to defer trading with those merchants, who from former time have belonged to the Government ; then there will be no disputes between your people and mine."

But this was not considered good enough by the English. They disapproved of the treaty which Vansittart had concluded with the Nawab. Those members of the Council who had been serving outside Calcutta (excepting those at Patna and Chittagong) were summoned there to concert measures and plans which had for their object to annul the Munger Treaty and extort further concessions from Mir Kasim. On the arrival of all these Englishmen in Calcutta, their proceedings began in February and lasted till April 1763. They were themselves the complainants, and they constituted themselves into judges, too, to sit in judgment on the Nawab. What their judgment was may be gathered from the following opinion of one Watts delivered at Fort William Consultation, 1st March 1763. He said :

" That by the Phirmaund and Husbull hookums the English East India Company have an undoubted right to trade in any articles produced in the Indostan Empire, either for foreign or Inland Trade, and that Dustucks ought to be given with any articles ; and that Meer Mahomed Jaffer Ally Cawn, in his Treaty, has very particularly confirmed the same, for the provinces under the Subahdarry of Bengal.

"Secondly, that duties ought not to be paid to the country government. on Salt, Betel Nut, Tobacco, or any articles that have a Dustuck with them.

"Thirdly, that Dustucks be granted with such articles for the future.

"Fourthly, that no passports or certificates should be granted to Company's servants or others; but that Salt have a dustuck with it, if the sole property of a Company's servant, but not to other English inhabitants.

"Fifthly, that the President, in his letter to the Nabob, has given up the privilege which the Company enjoyed by the Phirman and therefore he continued in the same sentiments as in the Consultation of the 17th January.

"Sixthly, that subjecting our English Gomastahs to the country government would entirely prevent us from carrying on our trade ; nor is there any necessity for any regulations in those parts where we have an English factory, but in the distant parts of the provinces something is necessary to be established, as well as to prevent our gomastah from being guilty of oppressions to the country people, as to keep the officers of the government from behaving in the manner they have lately done ; and this point can only be settled between the Nabob and us."

Such was the opinion of other members of the Council and they all (excepting of course Warren Hastings,) censured Vansittart for his trying to be just and fair to the Nawab.*

* What his opponents thought of Vansittart's conduct is evident from the following extract of a letter to Clive, dated 26th of February 1763, written by Major Carnac:

"Mr. Vansittart's interview with the Nabob, instead of removing our grievances, has occasioned their being exceedingly multiplied, and carried beyond sufferance. He, in conjunction with Mr. Hastings, without consulting the rest of the Board, established a set of regulations, whereby a duty of 9 percent. is laid upon all articles of inland trade without exception; and the disputes of our gomastahs and others in our employ are subjected to the decisions of the Nabob's officers. These concessions are so evidently shameful and disadvantageous to us, that it is not to be conceived they could ever have been submitted to, except by persons who were bought into them, and, indeed, it is confidently asserted, and generally believed, that Mr. Vansittart got seven lacs by his visit to Mongyr. The members of the Council then at Calcutta, passed a severe minute of censure upon the President's procedure and summoned the absent members, in order to devise a speedy and effectual remedy for the complaints received from every quarter. They have been some time assembled, and have absolutely forbid the regulations being complied with, and have issued out orders to repel by force any insults that shall in future be offered, or obstructions to our trade." Malcolm's *Life of Clive*, Vol. II, p. 283.

According to Vansittart (*Narrative*, II. 272) Major Carnac wrote all the minutes recorded by Amyatt, the chief of the opposition in Council, and that he and Ellis were the leaders of the party whose object it was to force a rupture with Kasim Ali (*Ibid.*, 233).

Elphinstone in his *Rise of the British Power in India*, p. 382, writes that "the Calcutta Council called in Major Carnac, though he was not entitled to a seat at their Board except when military affairs were under discussion, but who was one of the most active.........of the opponents to the Governor's measures. His admission to the council had a material effect at this crisis. He concurred in a resolution that the regulations made by the Governor were dishonourable to the council as Englishmen, and ruinous to their trade and the Company's ; that the issue of them by the Governor

In vain did Vansittart plead for the Nawab ; he was looked upon as a hired advocate. The majority of the Council were against him. He had only one supporter in Warren Hastings. Of course, the councillors did not believe in, or act upon, the saying of their Master, "Do unto others", etc.

The Nawab did not think of employing force, but he was being provoked by the English to do so. As is evident from Major Carnac's letter to Clive, his countrymen were bent upon hostilities with the Nawab. Mir Kasim tried to do all that lay in his power to settle all the differences with the English. He wrote a letter to the Governor, dated 26th February, 1763, that

"Three demands which I formerly put to you I now again repeat. The first is, from the beginning until now the Nazim of Bengal corresponded with the Governor of Calcutta, just as I have been acquainted with you, my friend, and am now acquainted with you, and not having a single word of correspondence with the rest of the Board.

"The second is, *viz.*, I formerly represented to you, that the Company's trade has been fixed time immemorial ; at this present, besides the Company's trade, the Gomastahs of English gentlemen have set up the trade of salt, tobacco, dried fish, timber, &c., and make purchase of the country people with force and extortion, and are continually contriving unjust disputes and wranglings with my officers ; so that the poor, the inhabitants, the merchants, and manufacturers of my country are oppressed, and both you and myself are troubled with unjust vexations. Now I say also, that your Gomastahs are to trade as in customs in the merchandizes imported and exported, which has been the practice in this country ; and are to refrain from those articles of trade which perplex the revenues due to my administration, and are a cause of disputes, and be the ruin of the inhabitants and poor people.

"The third is, whether your Excellency's will is, at all events, to commit the expensee of the army and management of the country and his Majesty's revenues, to me ; and your own gomastahs are to carry on those branches of trade which were never practised in the country ; and my country is to be oppressed, under pretences of trade, and the officers of my Government are to have no concern in the affairs of the administration or be allowed to say a word."

The letter of the Nawab was read at the Board on the 7th March 1763. Of course the Board did not accede to any one of the requests of the Nawab. They agreed to give him

"a full account of what has been hitherto resolved on by the Board, in consequence of the Phirmaund, and other public orders of the Court, and of the subsequent treaties, which have all been referred to, and strictly examined ; and by the tenor of which the Board are determined to abide."

The Board at the same time resolved that,

"Messrs Amyatt and Hay be deputed to the Nabob with full instructions, agreeable to the resolutions of Council ; and that they do carry along with them a person who shall afterwards be resident at the Durbar, to transact such business as must necessarily occur."*

was a breach of their privileges, and that instructions should be sent to all the factories to suspend acting on them. A still more decisive stroke was suggested by Major Carnac himself ; it was to call in all the absent councillors, except Mr. Ellis and the chief at Chittagong, who were at too great a distance, and by this means the persons against whose proceedings Mr. Vansittart's measures had been directed, and who each regarded him as a personal enemy, were brought together to judge of his conduct."

* Fourth Report, 1773, pp. 492-493.

The Nawab, on the receipt of the above decisions of the Board, wrote to them on the 22nd March 1763 :

"The affair of duties is as follows :—On account of the oppression of the English gomasthas, there has not so much as a single farthing been collected by way of duties. Nay, so far from it, you form collusions with some of my people and exact fines from others. And many merchants who ought to pay customs have carried their goods duty free through your protection. Upon this account I have entirely given up the collection of my duties, removed all chokey's wheresoever established. For why should I subject my character to be reproached without cause, on account of duties?* If any one of my people shall insist upon duties I will severely punish him. As to what you write of your grounding your rights upon the Firman and former sunnads, I have been twenty or thirty years in this country and I am perfectly well acquainted with the nature thereof. But you ought to remember that your gomastahs until the time of Meer Mahamed Jaffir Cawn traded only in some certain articles. Nay altho' I stood your friend you were unable to provide ten or twenty timbers from Chittagong for building, but now in my administration your gomastahs make so many disturbances and are guilty of so great injuries that I cannot enumerate them. Judge therefore from these circumstances who is the oppressor and who the oppressed."†

It can not be denied that the Nawab had just grievances against his European friends. Messrs. Vansittart and Hastings gave their opinion as follows before the Board on 24th March :

"It has however been determined by the majority of the Board, that we shall trade in all articles custom free, as well as from place to place in the country as in foreign imports and commodities for exportation, which resolution being declared to the Nabob he on his part has determined to take customs in general and lay trade entirely open. We cannot think him to blame in this proceeding, nor do we see how he could do otherwise, for although it may be for our interest to determine that we will have all the trade in our hands, that we will employ our own people to make salt, take every article of the produce of the country off the ground at the first hand, and afterwards send it which way we please, free of customs ; we say, though it may be for our interest to make this unlimited use of our force, yet it is not to be expected the Nawab will join with us in endeavouring to deprive every merchant of the country of the means of carrying on their business, which must undoubtedly soon be the case if they are obliged to pay heavy duties, and we trade in every article on the footing before mentioned. Neither in our opinion could the Nawab in such circumstances collect enough to pay the expense of the chokeys, collectors, &c., so that trade would be liable to clogs and interruptions, without any benefit to the Government."

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* The translator of the *Seir* in a footnote writes :

"The Nawab, to get rid of the persecutions of the English on their private trade, at once took to the bold and comprehensive expedient of publishing all over Bengal, a general abolition of all custom-houses, tolls, and fees ; and of granting a general indiscriminate exemption to all traders whatsoever. Could anything be fairer with regard to the English ?.............Here the Nawab suspected that the general exemption would infallibly favour only his own subjects, who living and subsisting so much on a lower scale than the English, would infallibly undersell them in all the markets, and of course expel them from everywhere. But this was at once guessed by the English of those times."........(ii. 469, Calcutta reprint).

† On hearing of the Nawab being oppressed, the authorities wrote as follows :—

"We positively direct as you value our service, that you do immediately acquaint the Nabob, in the Company's name, that we disapprove of every measure which has been taken in real prejudice to his authority and government, particularly with respect to the wronging in his revenues by a shameful abuse of dusticks." Court's letter, Dec. 30, 1762.

The concillors, excepting Vansittart and Warren Hastings, were indignant at this just action of the Nawab. They being

"of opinion that the Nawab as Subah had no authority to take such a step ; that it was done with a view to prejudice the Company's business, and counteract the measures which the Board had been taking for the welfare of trade in general.*

It was resolved, as mentioned before, to depute Amyatt and Hay to the Nawab at Munger. When the intelligence arrived that the Nawab had abolished all internal duties for two years, it was further resolved by the Council that the gentlemen whom they were about to depute should insist on the Nawab's revoking that sunnud, and collecting duties as before.

Amyatt and Hay were selected to proceed on deputation to the Nawab at Munger. The Council furnished them with instructions which, according to Vansittart,† authorised no negotiation or concession, and confined the functions of the deputies to enforcing and insisting on the demands already made, with the addition of some very unacceptable articles. He refused to receive the deputation headed by Amyatt, who was his declared enemy. The Nawab's letters, as Vansittart remarks, were those of a despairing man ; and very probably he had made up his mind to go to war with the English, for he had by this time probably become convinced of the latter's design to force him into a quarrel so as to afford a pretext to depose him. If he did so, he was not wrong ; for such were the designs of the English. Elphinstone writes :

"Hostile intentions had been imputed to him from the moment of his accession ; his exertions to improve his army, his attempts to call in the dues of his treasury, everything that had a tendency to increase his own efficiency, was suppossed to be designed against the English. Yet his conduct in other respects was irreconcilable to such a notion. He carried on no intrigues with European powers, made no overtures to the Marattas, and was less conciliating towards Shah Alam and Shuja-u-Doula than the British themselves desired. He made enemies of all his Zamindars, and, at the crisis of his dispute with the English, he undertook the distant and dangerous expedition to Nepal. Except in prematurely acting on the agreement regarding customs, he conducted himself under innumerable provocations with temper and forbearance, only showing as much firmness as seemed likely to repress encroachment, and it was not till the disappointment of all hope of support from England and the unqualified submission of Mr. Vansittart to his enemies, that he showed the least inclination to resort to the desperate expedient of taking up arms in his defence. The state of his mind is shown by two letters which he wrote to the Governor some days after the departure of the mission. In the first, dated April 11, he expresses his uneasiness at Mr, Amyatt's visit, and requests that his escort may not exceed one or two companies, and in the other (April 15) he exclaims against the duplicity of the government, which, while professing peace and friendship, have sent their troops in several divisions through hills and forests towards his capital. At this time not a soldier had moved, but he was prepossessed with the idea that Mr. Amyatt's mission was like that of Mr. Vansittart's to Mir Jafir, and that the scene which led to his own elevation was about to be repeated at his downfall.

"Had he known the resolutions taken by the Board the day before that of his last letter (April 14) he would have had some ground for his apprehensions. On that day a force was ordered to be prepared for service, and Mr. Ellis was warned that he might expect orders to take possession of the city of Patna."§

* Wheeler's *Early Records of British India*, p. 309.

† *Narrative*, Vol. III, pp. 128-135. See also *Third Report, 1773*, Appendix No. 40, p.347.

§ *Rise of the British power in India*, pp. 390-391.

Mir Kasim after all consented to receive the deputation. So on the 15th May, Amyatt and Hay had an interview with him at Munger. This was more or less a ceremonial visit. But ten days later, the deputies presented their demands in writing.

"They were eleven in number, and included a written recognition of the Council's decision about customs and agents, a reimposition of the duties on the Nabob's subjects, compensation to all who had suffered by the interference with the English trade, punishment of the Nabob's officers, and many other unpalatable articles, all couched in the most peremptory language."*

Of course, no prince possessing any sense of self-respect could have acceded to these demands. But to compel the Nawab's compliance, the English were preparing to appeal to force. They had already warned Ellis to attack and capture Patna. And they, it seems, also sent a supply of arms laden in boats to Patna. The arrival of these boats at Munger alarmed the Nawab and he very properly ordered his men to detain them. When the news of the detention of these boats reached Calcutta, the councillors met and wrote to the Nawab that his conduct was a declaration of war. Amyatt and Hay were instructed to return to Calcutta and Ellis was directed to assault and capture Patna. The Nawab opened negotiations with Shuja-ud-daula, the ruler of Oudh, and had his troops disciplined by Armenian officers. According to his orders from Calcutta, Ellis surprised and carried Patna by escalade on the night of the 24th June. Amyatt was permitted to return to Calcutta, but Hay was kept as a hostage at Munger. The Nawab was incensed at the conduct of Ellis, and he, not without some justification, ordered the massacre of all the English in his dominions. Under the Armenian officer Marcar the Nawab sent troops to Patna to drive out Ellis and the English force from that place. Marcar succeeded in his expedition. Patna was recovered. Ellis and other Europeans were brought captives to Munger.†

Amyatt had been permitted to leave Munger, but it seems that he was waylaid and killed near Kasimbazar. From the records it is not certain whether his murder was premeditated or merely accidental.§

* *Ibid.*, p. 393.

† *Seir-ul Mutakherin*, ii, pp. 467 et seq. (Calcutta reprint of 1903). See also Long's *Selections*, page 327.

§ See *Seir*, Vol. II, p. 476 (Footnote by the translator of the Seir, Calcutta reprint).

"The Nawab's order being to send Amyatt with his retinue to Monghyr, Mahomed Taky-ghan betook himself to the following expedient, to execute the commission with ease, and without tumult. Being then encamped on the Bagraty, between Murshidabad and Cassimbazar, as soon as the boats were descried, he sent his friend and steward, Aga-aaly-toork, to invite Amyatt to an entertainment. Amyatt excused himself, and continued pushing in the middle of the stream. Another message was sent by a person of still greater consequence, who represented, that the entertainment being ready, the general would think himself aggrieved by the disappointment. Amyatt, having again excused himself, the envoy returned; and on his landing, the boat-men were hailed from shore, and *ordered* to bring to. This order was answered by two musket-balls, and then by a volley, which being answered from shore, the boats were immediately boarded, and such a scene of slaughter ensued, as is hardly to be described; as Amyatt, by his eternal instigations, as well as by his very haughty temper, was reputed the author of the rupture."

On learning of the death of Amyatt the Calcutta Board wrote a letter to Mir Kasim censuring his conduct and informing him that he was dethroned from the *masnad* of Bengal. These gentlemen had as early as 20th June determined in the event of a rupture to reinstate Mir Jafar.

On the 7th of July was issued the proclamation of war against Mir Kasim and of restoration of Mir Jafar to the masnad of Bengal. Warren Hastings and Verelst stood neutral regarding the war, thinking it to be unjust.

Mir Kasim's letter of the 28th June 1763 was received on the 7th July at Calcutta. In this letter he wrote :

"In my heart I believed Mr. Ellis to be my inveterate enemy, but from his actions I now find he was inwardly my friend, as appears by this step which he has added to the others. Like a night robber he assaulted the Killa of Patna, robbed and plundered the bazar and all the merchants and inhabitants of the city, ravaging and slaying from the morning till the 3rd pahur (afternoon); then I requested of you 2 or 300 muskets laden on boats, you would not consent to it. This unhappy man in consequence of his inward friendship favored me in this fray and slaughter with all the muskets and cannon of his army, and is himself relieved and eased from his burden since it never was my desire to injure the affairs of the Company; whatever loss may have been occasioned by this unhappy man to myself in this tumult, I pass over, but you Gentlemen must answer for any injury which the Company's affairs have suffered, and since you have unjustly and cruelly ravaged the city and destroyed the people, and plundered effects to the value of lacs of rupees, it becomes the justice of the Company to make reparation to the poor, as formerly was done for Calcutta. You Gentlemen were wonderful friends. Having made a treaty to which you pledged the name of Jesus Christ, you took from me a country to pay the expenses of your Army, with the condition that your Troops should always attend me, and promote my affairs. In effect you kept up a force for my destruction, since from their hands such events have proceeded. I am entirely of opinion that the Company favours me, in causing to be delivered to me the rents for three years of my country. Besides this, for the violences and oppressions exercised by the English Gomastahs for several years past in the Territories of the Nizamut, and the large sums extorted, and the losses occasioned by them, it is proper and just that the Company make restitution at this time. This is all the trouble you need to take. In the same manner as you took Burdwan and the other lands, you must favor me in resigning them." *

The Nawab's letter was no doubt couched in sarcastic language. But the systematic manner in which the English had ill-treated and insulted him, no doubt made his temper sour. Ellis's attack on Patna was unjustifiable and unprovoked. and so there was every justification for the tone which the injured Nawab assumed towards his quondam English friends.

APPENDIX.

In the Introduction to Vol. III of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* (p. x.), Maulvi Badrud-Din Ahmad writes that

"Mir Kasim's difficulties were increased by the overbearing insolence of the Company's servants . . The Company's servants not only asserted that they were entitled to carry on private trade duty-free, but sold this stolen privilege to other native traders. . . .The public revenue was thus shamefully defrauded, ...But that was not all : the *Nazim* began to suspect that the English were secretly

* Long's *Selections*, pp. 325-326.

negotiating with the Emperor to acquire the *Divani* of his dominions, and so wrest the revenue administration of his country from his hands altogether.

"A duty of 9 per cent. on the prime cost in one lump sum was imposed upon the inland trade of the Company's servants. It had been agreed to by one of their own representatives, Henry Vansittart, the Governor. But no sooner had Vansittart published the agreement to the *Council* than the whole body denounced it in the most vehement terms. Not a pice they declared, would they pay on any commodity, except the duty of 2½ per cent. on salt, the only duty to which the *Nazim* in their opinion was entitled. Warren Hastings alone sided with the Governor in upholding the justice of the agreement against the clamours of blind self-interest. Every attempt at conciliation only produced more hectoring ; every effort to obtain a fair settlement was met with obstruction, until at length the *Nazim* resolved on a bold step. He abolished all duties, and so placed his own subjects on an equal footing with the Company's servants. This was too much for his opponents, who at once declared war upon him. William Ellis, Chief of Patna factory, a hot-headed, nervous man with exaggerated ideas of the dangers of his own situation, captured the town. What followed, is a matter of common history."

Mir Kasim came to understand the perfidious character of his Christian allies. He complained bitterly of their want of scruples and the manner in which he, his officers and subjects were being treated by them. Justice and right were on his side, but faithlessness was on that of the English. The Nawab wrote to the Governor, on February 22, 1763

"that the *tilangas* [Indian sepoys] were entertained in the Company's service to punish their common enemies. He did not imagine that they would be sent against him. The Governor's giving credit to the complaints of the *gumashtas*, sending *tilangas*, and then forwarding His Excellency a translation of those complaints is 'shameful'."*

Again, in another letter bearing the same date, he wrote to the Governor that he

"understands that a number of the [English] gentlemen intend to set up another *Subahdar*. It is of no consequence to His Excellency whoever succeeds him. . . .Has given *50 lakhs* of rupees in land for the maintenance of *tilangas*. It is amazing that the [English] gentlemen are collecting troops to ruin His Excellency's country. Says that it is evident to everyone that Europeans cannot be trusted."†

The Governor wrote to the Nawab, in reply to the above letter :

"The story that the English want to set up another *Nazim* is a fabrication of designing men whose wish it is to create a disturbances in the country for their private ends."§

Of course, what the Governor wrote was not true.

In reply to the above letter, Mir Kasim again wrote to the Governor :

"His Excellency regards the Governor as a just man, but in this matter he is not doing justice. . , A *Gumashtah* of the Company's has therefore set His Excellency's *Naib* at defiance and yet the Governor will not punish him ?. . . .Laments that the Governor believes every idle tale that is related to him concerning His Excellency. The Governor promised to punish mischief-makers. Mr. Ellis is one. It is amazing that the Governor does not know it."**

But the Governor was not a just man. How he was treating the Nawab and his subjects, is evident from what the latter wrote to him on 5th March, 1763.

* *Calendar*, Vol. I, p. 188, No. 1676.

† *Ibid.*, p. 189, No. 1679.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 199, No. 1683.

** *Ibid.*, p. 19?, No. 1687

"When His Excellency went to Behar, Bengal being left without a ruler, every village and district in that province was ruined through the oppression of the English, the subjects of the *Sarkar* were deprived of their daily bread, and the collection of the revenues was entirely stopped, so that His Excellency lost nearly a crore of rupees. . . .When the Governor was at Monghyr, he promised to settle all disputes between the *Sarkar* and the Company. But on his return to Calcutta, he sent troops to carry on the Company's business by force. His Excellency's officers are beaten and chastised if they dare speak a word. His Excellency has not, for these three years, received a single coin or article from the English, and yet fines and penalties are being levied upon the officers of the *Sarkar*."*

The treatment meted out to him by his European friends exhausted the patience of Mir Kasim. He wrote to the Governor on the 14th March, 1763 :

"It is only for friendship's sake that His Excellency has put up with everything. Now that he is being insulted by 'servants and people of no character,' his patience is quite exhausted. One may by all means be friendly to one man, but, to be dependent upon ten people is beyond one's power. Has in no way violated the agreement."†

Over and over again, the Nawab complained of the conduct of Ellis, whom he called a "mischief-monger," and asked the Governor to punish him. But the Nawab was bluntly told by the Governor, in his letter dated 17th March 1763, that he

"does not believe in any of the charges laid against Mr. Ellis. Requires proofs of what His Excellency advances. The said gentleman parades and marches troops about in order to protect the Company's business." §

The Nawab was quite disgusted with the conduct of the Governor and other members of the Council. Their intentions were now quite evident to him. The English did not hold treaties more binding than waste paper. He wrote to the Governor on 20th March 1763.

"His Excellency never gets anything by collecting duties. Moreover, they are the cause of endless disputes between him and the Company. Has therefore put an entire stop to collecting them. . . . . Has not realised a single farthing on account of the customs, while the rents have been paid to the sepoys. The person who is to be chosen as his successor will make good those losses. . . . . .Sends back the agreement recently concluded between the Governor and His Excellency. If the old treaty has not been of any use to him, a new one cannot. Will send the old treaty also if the Governor so desires." **

Again, on the 22nd March 1763, the Nawab wrote to the Governor :

"The English have combined with some of His Excellency's people and taken penalties from others. . . . . .Mr. Ellis is losing no opportunity of bringing about a rupture. It is the custom of the Europeans to change their chief every three years. His Excellency has been in office for nearly three years. The English want to have a change now, and are creating those disturbances with a view of provoking His Excellency into some rash act and so finding an excuse for deposing him." ††

The English were preparing for war with the Nawab, but they wanted time; and hence they tried to lull his suspicions by protestation that "they earnestly desire to prevent such an

* *Ibid.*, p. 194, Mo. 1695.
† *Ibid.*, p. 199, No 1707.
§ *Ibid.*, p. 202, No. 1716.
** *Ibid.*, p. 203, No. 1718.
†† *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204, No. 1719.

event happening, they are sending Amyatt and Hay to negotiate a new treaty with His Excellency."*

And again on 1st April 1763, the Governor wrote to the Nawab, that "the Council are willing to accede to his just demands." †

The Nawab was no longer to be soothed with the smooth promises and fair words of the Governor. The Governor was wrath with the Nawab for calling the members of the Council "servants" and "men of low character." In justification of his making use of those expressions, the Nawab wrote to the Governor, on 2nd April, 1763:

"With regard to his calling the gentlemen of the Council 'servants' and 'men of low character,' asks the Governor to consider whether such people as are sending sepoys to seize the officers of the *Sarkar* and are creating disturbances, are of low character or not." §

In the same letter he also wrote that "the Governor has sent people into the country and created disturbances. It appears that he is not willing to help His Excellency but wants to set up another Nawab. As to mercantile affairs, His Excellency has relinquished everything, and there remains nothing for Mr. Amyatt to negotiate. The question of the revenues can be settled with His Excellency's successor."

The Nawab was fully justified to write to the Governor, on April 19, 1763, that

"His Excellency pays the expenses of the Company's army, and the only favour shown him is that his officers are being seized and beaten. It is the English who are ready to make war on him. Has no objection to receiving Mr. Amyatt and Mr. Hay if they are accompanied by only one or two companies of sepoys. Remarks that on one side the Governor is taking violent measures, while on the other, he is sending a deputation to confer with His Excellency. A conference attended with such violences was never heard of in any country. As to the Governor's saying that *besides* the articles of customs, the orders lately issued by His Excellency are not consistent with the Company's rights and privileges, His Excellency wants to know if he is an *amil* or a *wadadidar*, or a Zamindar or a *Gumastah*, or a *Mutsaddi*, that he cannot issue orders about anything excepting the customs."**

The English were bent upon forcing a new treaty on the Nawab. Regarding this he wrote to the Governor:

"To make a new treaty every year is contrary to rule, for the treaties of men have lives."††

He stated his case why his allies deposed Jafar and placed him on the masnad of Bengal. He narrated all that he had done for the Company of English Merchants. He wrote:

"Notwithstanding that His Excellency had done so much for the Company, the English bind and carry away his officers, speak whatever comes into their mouths, and place guards upon his houses and forts."§§

But his English friends to whom he wrote were not noted for the possession of any sense of gratitude, honour, honesty or justice and fair dealings.

* *Ibid.*, p. 204, No. 1720.

† *Ibid.*, p. 204, No. 1721.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

** *Ibid.*, p. 207, No. 1730.

†† *Ibid.*, p. 209, No. 1737. It is stated in the *Calendar* that this "was in the Nawab's own hand."

§§ *Ibid.*, p. 208—209, No. 1736.

War being inevitable, the Nawab made what preparations he could for it. He knew that six years previously it was the intrigues of the English with Jagat Seth and others of his family which brought disaster on Shiraj-ud-daula. It was expedient, therefore, to confine those Hindus so that they might not be in a position to commit any mischief. So he removed Jagat Seth and his brother Sarup Chand to Munger. The English had no right to complain of this procedure of the Nawab. Yet the Governor wrote to him on April 24, 1763, that

"The Seths are men of high rank and the treatment meted out to them is extermely improper. It is, moreover, a violation of the agreement and reflects dishonour upon His Excellency and the Governor.......

"The Seths are merchants and have never interfered in the business of the *Sarkar*. The story that they are in alliances with the English is utterly false."*

In reply to the above, the Nawab wrote to the Governor on May 9, 1763.

"that he is justified in having them seized and brought to Monghyr. On His Excellency's accession to the *masnad*, they agreed to live with him and assist him in the affairs of the *Nizamat*. But notwithstanding that he repeatedly sent them invitations, they refused to come, put a stop to their own business, threw the affairs of the *Nizamat* into utter confusion, and treated him as an enemy."

Then, in a postscript in his own hand, he added:—

"The treaty does not allow the English to interfere on behalf of the dependants of the *Sarkar*, and yet they do it." †

The Nawab, after all, received Amyatt and Hay, who delivered a list of demands numbering 11 in all.§ On receipt of this list of demands, the Nawab wrote to Amyatt that he

"will reply to the Company's demands in two or three days. Desires in the mean time no unpleasant conversation should take place between them. Invites him to an entertainment arranged in his honour."**

The Nawab exhibited his signs of good breeding and courtly manners in inviting the Envoy of the Company to an entertainment and preventing any unpleasant conversation taking place between them. But it did not suit the taste of that representative of the Company. It was not improbable that the Nawab would have amicably settled the differences with the Company had the Envoy treated him with a little courtesy and tact. But the tone in which he couched the reply to the Nawab's letter of invitation shows him to be wanting in good breeding and manners. Amyatt's letter was dated May 25. 1763, †† in which he did not comply with the request of the Nawab.

After such behaviour of the Envoy, the Nawab did not see his way to comply with any of the demands made on him by the Company. The next day (*i. e.*, the 26th May, 1763) after the receipt of Amyatt's letter the Nawab sent his reply to the Company's demands.§§ On receipt of the Nawab's reply, Amyatt and Hay wrote to him:

* *Ibid.*, p. 211, Nos. 1745, 1747.

† *Ibid.*, p. 216, No. 1771.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 218, No. 1778E.

** *Ibid.*, p. 219, No. 1779.

†† *Ibid.*, p. 219, No. 1780. See also p. 220, No. 1783.

§§ *Ibid.*, p. 220. No. 1784.

"Are sorry to learn that His Excellency has not complied with a single demand of theirs." *

In reply, the Nawab wrote back :

"Asks to which article he has not returned a satisfactory answer. Has never impeded the Company's trade. Is ready to perform his agreement. But if the English make new demands every month and invent excuses for making war on him, he is without remedy. Even the meanest person would not choose to give his good name and honour to the winds. Mr. Amyatt has not yet listened to his grievances, and is going away without settling anything." †

On June 2, 1763, the Nawab wrote to the Governor :

"The Company's demands are unreasonable and contrary to former treaties...... Desires that the English troops at Patna may either be recalled to Calcutta or stationed at Monghyr, else he will relinquish the *Nizamat*." §

On June 3rd, 1763, the Nawab wrote to the Governor :

"Messrs. Amyatt and Hay refuse to listen to his representations. They say that instead of removing the troops from Patna, they will reinforce them, and that if the Nawab wants war, the English are ready.....Is desirous of coming to terms with the English, but cannot see his way thereto. His patience is almost exhausted." **

The English wanted war, and so they did not heed any of the representations of the Nawab.

THE WAR WITH MIR KASIM.

The English did everything in their power to exasperate Mir Kasim and provoke him to hostilities. But to his credit it should be said that he did nothing which would lead to breach of the peace with them. He was the aggrieved party and yet he bore his grievances and the wrongs inflicted on him by the English with great patience. It was the English who were the first to commence hostilities and the conduct of Ellis in attacking Patna was quite unjustifiable. But now that Ellis was defeated and the British officers and the troops under them were prisoners in the hands of Mir Kasim, and Amyatt had been killed, the English proclaimed their war openly against Mir Kasim. They did not, like Ellis, any more resort to treachery. Although the Calcutta Councillors were for war, Vansittart was opposed to it. The author of the *Seir* writes that at a meeting of the Council, Vansittart

"produced a note, in which he observed, 'that Mr. Ellis, with a multitude of Englishmen, officers, civilians, and soldiers, being in Mir Kasim's power, no doubt could be entertained, but all these unfortunate men would be made away with, the moment the Nawab should know for certain that an army had come out of Calcutta for his ruin. Is it not then proper and prudent, added the Governor, to endeavour to live upon some terms with that merciless, sanguinary man, until the prisoners can be recovered out of his hands ? After which, it would be time to proceed on projects of war and revenge.' This reasonable speech made no effect ; and, as the Councillors greatly suspected their Governor, and thought themselves so certain of his being Mir Kasim's protector

* *Ibid.*, p. 221, No. 1785.

† *Ibid.*, p. 221, No, 1786.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 222. No. 1789.

** *Ibid.*, p. 222, No. 1792.

that they ascribed to artifice and to design the temporising policy he had just now-proposed, they rose up in the utmost violence of passion, and taking the paper on which Vansittart had written his proposal, they added at the bottom of it, *that were all the prisoners to a man killed by Mir Cassim they would not for a moment recede from their proposed revenge, or ever come to terms of accommodation with it.* After saying so much, they all put their names to it." *

Vansittart and Hastings entered their minutes of dissent. †

Major Adams was ordered to take command of the troops and instructed to proceed with caution, and leave nothing in the rear which might in any manner endanger the settlement.

The Nawab's army was placed under the command of Taky Khan, who was a brave and talented officer but was unfortunately hampered in all his movements and proposals by Syed Muhamad Khan, Deputy Governor of Murshidabad.

The troops of the English proceeded from Calcutta and those of the Nawab from Munger and other places to Murshidabad. § It is not necessary to mention in detail all the fightings and skirmishes which took place between these two troops. The reader may turn with advantage to the pages of the *Seir* or Broome's History of the Bengal Army for a description of all these fightings, which ended in the defeat of the Nawab's troops and death of Taky Khan. From the *Seir*, it is also evident that there were traitors—and the name of one at least, Mirza Iraj Khan, is mentionod—in the camp of Mir Kasim through whose treachery the Muhammadans were betrayed. The English were victorious not so much by the strength of their swords as by means of the traitors whom they had raised in the camp of their enemy.**

The death of his able general Taky Khan and the several reverses greatly depressed Mir Kasim. He resolved to make his last stand at a place called Udhua Nala.†† In choosing

* Vol. II, p. 478-479.

† Third report, 1773, p. 359.

§ For a description of the Nawab's troops, see Broome's *History of the Bengal Army* pp. 351 *et seq.*

** Thus, regarding the much disputed battle of Sooty, the translator of the *Seir*, in a footnote to page 489, Vol. II, writes :

"Several officers that had been in the engagement, affirmed a few days after the battle, that the English had really been defeated at Sooty, but for the turn which the engagement took in the end. But at Murshidabad and at Calcutta, the universal report was, that two hundred Europeans, of all nations, who served the enemy's artillery, could not behold the distress of the English, without being affected, and that they passed all to their side. It was even said that they were hailed by the English officers, and asked whether they were not Europeans as well as themselves."

†† The author of the *Seir* thus describes the place:

"The Ooda is a little deep river that comes from the hills of Raj-mahal on the south, and empties itself in the Ganga in a small plain covered with thorns and brambles. Its banks are steep, lofty, and so beset as to afford no passage anywhere but with extreme difficulty, if at all ; and it was upon that little river that Meer Casim had ordered a bridge of brick and stone work to be raised some months before. He had seen and admired the natural strength of that part, and had ordered a deep ditch to be dug beyond the little river, and a strong rampart or intrenchment to be raised behind it, so as that the ditch and rampart might extend from the foot of the hills down to the Ganga, leaving between them and the little river, a sufficient plain for encamping troops. The ditch was deep, had a wooden bridge over it, and joined a lake and morass which, coming from the foot

this place Mir Kasim showed his great military genius and sagacity, for he could not have chosen a better spot to defend himself, since nature itself has strongly fortified it. And Mir Kasim himself did all that human ingenuity could conceive or suggest to make this spot strong. He was a capable administrator, and although he himself never sought a quarrel with the English, he had been making every preparation to meet such an emergency, should it arise. Broome in his History of the Bengal Army has mentioned all the steps which Mir Kasim took to reform and raise the efficiency of his troops. Regarding the muskets with which Mir Kasim's troops were armed, the above-named author writes:

"The muskets with which they were armed were manufactured in the country, and from trials subsequently made between them and the Tower-proof arms of the Company's troops, the reader will be surprised to learn, that they were found superior to those of English manufacture, particularly in the barrels, the metal of which was of an admirable description; the flints also were of a very excellent quality, composed of agates found in the Rajmahal Hills, and were much preferred to those imported." *

There was one defect in his organization which, like poison, proved fatal to his cause. That defect was the enlistment of Europeans in his army and placing troops under the command of European officers. Since the days of the early Crusaders, these Christians had been waging war against the Musalmans. The followers of the Cross have wiped out the independent existence of numerous states of the Crescent and have placed their yoke on the necks of the followers of Muhammad. Under such circumstances these Christians could never be faithful to or ever serve loyally their Muhammadan masters. Mir Kasim unfortunately not knowing this truth had entertained many a European Christian in his service and this caused him the loss of his Subahdaree.

The position of Mir Kasim was so strong at Udhua Nala that it was impossible for the English to make any impression on it by all the weapons of precision and destruction and other military resources they had at their command. For one month they encamped in front of it and yet they failed to do any injury to Mir Kasim's intrenched garrison. It was certain that by no fair means would they be able to capture Udhua Nala. On the other hand, night after night the camp of the English was surprised by the Nawab's men, which will be presently related.

It was unfortunate that the Nawab's officers and men, deeming their position quite secure against any sudden attack of their enemy, failed to take those precautionary measures which are always taken in time of war. According to the *Seir* they

"trusted so much to the natural strength of that post, and to the impracticability of the enemy's

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of the hills, encompassed a great part of the intrenchment, and greatly contributed to its defence in front; so that the only passage betwixt Monghyr and Raj-mahal lay over that ditch and through that intrenchment, which was fortified with a number of towers, that gave it the appearance of a castle. Nor was it possible to go to the right, unless indeed by mounting or descending the Ganga in boats; and this was impracticable, when there were troops to oppose such an attempt; nor indeed to the left, unless by wading through an impassable morass, or by climbing over the hills. It was in consequence of such considerations as these that Meer Casim had beforehand ordered that spot to be carefully fortified, considering it as fully capable to stop an enemy." Voll. II, pp. 491-492.

* P. २९१

forcing this passage, that they became negligent in their duty ; for most of the officers that had any money, made it a practice, on the beginning of the night, to gorge themselves with wine, and to pass the remainder of it in looking at the performances of dance-women, or in taking them to their beds." *

Wine and women were the cause of the ultimate destruction of these troops of Mir Kasim. But there was at least one officer in his forces at Udhua Nala who was not addicted to debauchery and drunkenness. The name of this officer was Najaf Khan. Being of sober habits, he made good use of his time and found means to harass the English. To quote the author of the *Seir* again :

"On reviewing often the intrenchment in that part which touched to the foot of the hills, he had picked an important intelligence from many of the highlanders, namely, that at that particular part there was a ford through the lake and morass, which led safely to the English encampment. Mirza Nujuf Khan, upon this intelligence, came out at about three o'clock in the morning, and falling upon that part of the English camp, (and there Mir Jafer Khan had his quarters) he occasioned so much tumult and consternation in it, that the old Nawab fled to his boats, and was going to drop down the river, when the English sent a body of Talingas to his assistance. On sight of these, Nujuf Khan, who had made an ample booty, returned within the intrenchment again." †

Najaf Khan made such sorties on the English camp every night. The English, annoyed at these sorties, set about examining from whence Najaf Khan and his men could possibly come out. They were themselves unsuccessful in their attempt. But good luck always attended them and so it did on this occasion, too. Writes the *Seir* :

"The path by which Najaf Khan used to make his sorties, had been taken notice of by an English soldier, who having fled from his own nation, had been long ago in Mir Cossim's service. This man, who, according to the rules of service amongst the English, would have been put to death had he fallen in their hands, had set out in the darkness of the night, and had gone through the ford, setting several marks on his passage ; and, being come out upon dry ground, he approached within hearing of the English sentries, and cried out in the English language, 'That he was such a one ; and that if they would procure his pardon, he would find means to carry his brethren over the intrenchment.' Fortune sided with this man. There happened to be upon duty at that part some English officers, who recollected his voice, and these assured him, with a solemn oath, that his life would be safe, and that he might come over in full safety. Upon these assurances, he marched up to them, informed them of what he had observed, and on a certain night he promised to return, and to shew them the ford. This interval was employed by the English in providing ladders and every requisite for an assault and escalade. At the appointed time, which, was about ten o'clock at night, the man made his appearance,........" §

On the night of the 4th September, the English traitor in the employ of Mir Kasim, the soldier who had deserted the colours of his country once, went to the camp of the English and conducted them along the ford to the intrenchments within the Udhua Nala. Mir Kasim's officers and men, after debauchery and orgies, were fast asleep when the English entered their intrenchments and made a "battue" of them. According to the English translator of the *Seir*, Mir Kasim lost full fifteen thousand men in that surprise and flight.

* Vol. II, p. 496.

† *Ibid.*,

§ *Ibid.*, p. 497.

Udhua Nala was the last hope of the Muhammadan Nawabs to regain their independence and throw off the yoke of the British merchants. But alas ! that hope was gone for ever by the treachery of a British soldier. What Plassey was to Shiraj, Udhua Nala proved to Mir Kasim. In both the places; the English were victorious, not by the valor of their arms, but by treachery and other means which will not bear scrutiny.

Although Mir Kasim had disciplined his army and equipped his men with the most recent arms, his failure in all the battles against the English is to be attributed to his absence from the scenes of action. English historians consider this to be due to his want of physical courage or cowardice. Bolts (*Consideration on Indjan Affairs*, p. 43), writes :

"And had not his (Meer Casim's) subordinate commanders proved deficient in personal courage or even had he himself had the bravery to animate his troops properly by his own presence in the field, it is more than probable that the English Company would have been left, from that day, without a single foot of ground in these provinces."

But it seems Mir Kasim had good reasons for not hazarding his own person in any engagement. There is probably much truth in the following statement of a contemporary Englishman :

"Mir Kasim was inured to the hardships of the field ; he united the gallantry of the soldier with the sagacity of the statesman ; but he did not hazard his own person in any engagement where his officers might have made a merit of their treachery in betraying him." *

It was a mistake on the part of Mir Kasim to have entertained in his service Europeans and Armenians, both as officers and soldiers. Some instances of the manner in which these employees betrayed his interests have already been mentioned before. The trust which he reposed in European and Armenian Christians was the cause of his ruin. † One of his commanders, and that too of an important arm of service, was an Armenian, by name Coja Gregory, called by the Mahomedan historians Gurgin Khan.§ He was a brother of Coja Petruse, a leading Armenian merchant of Calcutta. Coja Petruse employed all his talents and influence in tampering with the fidelity of his co-religionists in the service of the Nawab, and to further the cause of the English. He himself admitted this in his letter to the President of the Calcutta Board. Long in his *Records* (p. 339) writes :

"Petruse Aratoon or Coja Petruse was suspected by Major Adams to have been a spy for the Nawab and was seized as such and ill treated ; however, he vindicated his character to the Government. His brother commanded the Artillery of the Nawab at Patna, and was subsequently murdered there, the Nawab suspecting him of being too friendly to the English. Had he been alive, the massacre might have been prevented through his influence."

The very opening sentence of the petition which this Armemian wrote in defence of his loyalty ran as follows :

* *Transactions in India from 1756 to 1783.*

† "The recurrence of such serious disasters had rendered Mir Kasim suspicious of all his officers and more especially of Gurgin Khan, who was reported to be in communication with the English." —Broome's *Bengal Army*, i. 388.

§ See Meshrobe J. Seth's papers on these two brothers in Vols. X and XI in the Indian Historical Records Commission

"Your petitioner begs leave to observe to this Hon'ble Board, at Ouda Nulla, a place where the enemy had strong works and great forces, your petitioner by direction from Major Adams wrote two letters to Marcan and Arratoon, two Armenian officers, who amongst others commanded the enemy's forces, and intimated to them that as the English always favored and protected the Armenian nation, so the Armenians in justice ought to direct their steps towards the good of the English."

It is quite evident then that the Nawab's garrison at Udhua Nala was betrayed by the foul treachery of the Armenians.

After the capture of Udhua Nala, Mir Kasim fled precipitately to Munger, which he had very strongly fortified. It was from here that he wrote a letter, dated 7th September 1765, to the Calcutta authorities.

"That for these three months you have been laying waste the King's country with your forces, what authority have you? If you are in possession of any royal sunnud for my dismission you ought to send me either the original or a copy of it, that having seen it and shown it to my army, I may quit this country and repair to the presence of His Majesty. Although I have in no respect intended any breach of public faith, yet Mr. Ellis regarding not Treaties or Engagements in violation of public faith, proceeded against me with treachery and night assaults. All my people then believed that no peace or terms now remained with the English, and that wherever they could be found it was their duty to kill them. With this opinion it was that the Aumils of Moorshedabad killed Mr. Amyatt. But it was by no means agreeable to me that that gentleman should be killed. On this account I write, that if you are resolved on your own authority to proceed in this business, know for a certainty that I will cut off the heads of Mr. Ellis and the rest of your chiefs and send them to you. . . .

"Exult not upon the success which you have gained merely by treachery and night assaults, in two or three places, over a few jemmadars sent by me. By the will of God, you shall see in what manner this shall be revenged and retaliated."*

To the above letter, the President sent the following reply:

"Mr. Amyatt and Mr. Hay were sent to you as ambassadors, a title sacred among all nations, yet in violation to that title you caused Mr. Amyatt to be attacked and killed on his return, after having given him your passport, and Mr. Hay you unjustly kept as a prisoner with you. You surrounded and attacked our Factory at Cossimbazar and carried away our gentlemen from thence prisoners in a most disgraceful manner to Monghyr; although they had no concern in the war nor resisted your people. In like manner, in all other parts, you attacked the English agents who were carrying on their trade quietly, some you killed and some were carried away prisoners and their effects were everywhere plundered. After these proceedings do you ask for what reason Major Adams was sent with an Army? You know the laws of God and Man; as you had declared you would turn the English out of the country and had proceeded as far as you could towards it, it became necessary for us to take measures for our own defence and for the care of our own reputation.

"To put prisoners of war to death is an act which will appear shocking and unlawful not only to Christians and Mussulmen, but to the most barbarous Pagans; such sentiments are nowhere to be met with, but among the beasts of the forest. After the battle of Ouda Nullah above a thousand of your officers and men were prisoners in the hands of Major Adams, who released them without the least hurt or injury."

The reply of Major Adams to Mir Kasim's letter ran as follows:

"The English having always had in view the articles of the treaty endeavoured by pacific measures

* Vansittart's *Narrative*, III, 368-9.

to reconcile all differences with you, till the perfidious massacre of Mr. Amyatt compelled them, contrary to their inclination, to declare war against you. You say it was not your intention to murder Mr. Amyatt. Why then did you not punish the aggressors with the utmost severity ? There are three months elapsed and nothing done, we have now by the assistance of Providence brought your affairs to a very low ebb. It is true you have Mr. Ellis and many other gentlemen in your power ; if a hair of their heads is hurt you can have no title to mercy from the English and you may depend upon the utmost fury of their resentment, and that they will pursue you to the utmost extremity of the earth. Should we unfortunately not lay hold of you the vengeance of the Almighty cannot fail overtaking you, if you perpetrate so horrid an act as the murder of the gentlemen in your custody."

It cannot be denied that there was much force in Mir Kasim's letter ; there can be no doubt that he was an aggrieved man and that he had been wronged by the British in the most shameful manner possible. The quarrel was not of his seeking, but it was forced on him by the English. The letter which was addressed to him by them was couched in language not conciliatory in tone and meant more to irritate than soothe one's feelings. An aggressive and offensive attitude the English were the first to take. Mr. Ellis and other Englishmen who fell into Mir Kasim's hands were in reality rebels and not prisoners of war. They were caught red-handed and deserved capital punishment. But Mir Kasim weakened his position by not executing them as soon as they were captured by him, but keeping and feeding them for about three months. He cannot be blamed for taking the precautionary measure of imprisoning all the English in his dominions in order to prevent their rising against him. His subjects were so much exasperated against the English by the systematic ill-treatment they had been receiving at their hands for a number of years that they most gladly seized the opportunity and committed excesses against their persons and property. The reply which the Calcutta Board and Major Adams sent to Mir Kasim's letter was calculated to exasperate him rather than to make him forget all his past grievances. The English were conspiring against him. From Munger he had to retreat to Patna, carrying the English prisoners with him. So long he had not done any injury to them. But now finding that the English treated him with studied contempt and insult, and also smelling out the conspiracy that they had been hatching against him, in his self-defence he thought of executing them, whether those in his service or those in captivity. The first Christian who was executed was his Armenian general, Gurgin Khan. His death is thus recorded in a letter of Major Adams to the Board (dated Oct. 3, 1763) :

"We had a report yesterday that Coja Gregory [Gurgin Khan] has been wounded some days ago by a party of his Mogul cavalry who mutinied for want of their pay between Sovage Gurree and Nabob Gunge. It is just now confirmed by a hurcarra arrived from the enemy, with this addition that he died next day and that 40 principal people concerned were put to death upon the occasion ; though it was imagined that the Moguls were induced to affront and assault Coja Gregory by Cossim Ally Khan, who began to be very jealous of him on account of his good behaviour to the English." (Long's *Selections*, p. 333).

The Nawab had very just reasons for being displeased with the English. They captured Munger by treachery. They were tampering with the loyalty of Mir Kasim's soldiers. Adams and Carnac wrote from their camp at Colgong on the 19th September, 1763, to Monsieur Gentil in the army of Mir Kasim as follows :

"We are persuaded also that it must have been the most absolute necessity only which could have engaged you in so dishonorable a service to a Christian as that of the Moors, who always treat with the grossest brutality those of our religion and Europeans when it is in their power to do it with impunity. A favorable opportunity now offers to enable you to rid yourself of so irksome a slavery and to reconcile yourself with our nation, towards which you cannot deny but you have acted very improperly (and which is now at peace with yours). If you can contrive means for the delivery of our gentlemen from the power of Cossim Ally Khan and will convey them to us, you may place a firm reliance on the gratitude of the English, and we promise you fifty thousand Rupees immediately." *

Mons. Gentil who was 'the friend and confidant of Gurgin Khan' claims in his Memoires to have saved the lives of 5 Englishmen and one German. He represented to the Nawab that the men were *French* and *obtained their release through Gurgin Khan,* the Armenian Minister of Mir Kasim. †

Mir Kasim's suspicion of Gurgin Khan was not without foundation.

In a letter to the Board (dated 3 Octr. 1763) reporting the death of Gurgin Khan, Major Adams says : "Cossim Ally Khan...... began to be very jealous of him [Gurgin Khan] on account of his good behaviour to the English. I must confess this piece of news gives me some concern, as by all accounts he behaved very well to our gentlemen. And it was that only that occasioned him to fall under Kasim Ali Cawn's displeasure. Had he lived, he might probably have assisted in effecting their escape, as we hear he frequently was the means of saving their lives as well as the Setts and other prisoners." Mons. Gentil, 'the friend and confidant of Gurgin Khan' records in his Memoires (pub. at Paris in 1822) that 'the English had proposals made to Gurgin Khan to leave the service of the Nawab, assuring him that by this step he could save the life of his brother (Khojah Petrus), whom they were carrying as a prisoner in their camp." §

According to the *Seir,* the English prisoners of Mir Kasim

"had contrived, by the means of their servants, to procure abroad a number of muskets equal to their number, with ammunition sufficient for their purpose. But they did not come to hand; for, had they succeeded in this attempt, they were resolved to make their escape by main force; and if not, to kill so many men in their own defence, as should avenge their death, and do honour to their memory." **

Under these circumstances, Mir Kasim was perhaps justified in executing the Christian prisoners who were giving him much unnecessary trouble. It should also be remembered that these Englishmen were in a sense rebels.

The task of executing these persons was entrusted to one European soldier of fortune who had acquired the nickname of Sombre, or Somro according to Indian authors. He was a German and a Protestant and afterwards married or kept the well-known Begum Samroo of Sardhana fame. Except one Dr. Fullarton no other Englishman was left alive. ††

* Long's *Selections,* pp. 332-333.

† "The Memoires of Gentil" by Sir Evan Cotton.—Indian Historial Records Commission Procdgs., Vol. X, p. 20.

§ *Ind., Historical Records Commission Procdgs.,* Vol. X, p. 117.

** *Ibid.,* pp. 505-506.

†† For an account of this execution, see *Seir,* Vol. II, 505; also the third Parliamentary Report, 1773, p. 360 (Dr. Fullarton's letter to the Board).

As the English advanced towards Patna, the Nawab retired towards the river Karamnasa, which separated his dominions from those of the Nawab Vazir of Oudh. He was followed up by the English and so he had at last to leave his territory and on 4th December crossed into the country of Shuja-ud-daula.

Thus was closed the career as Subahdar of Bengal of Mir Kasim—a career which entitles him to the sympathy of all right-thinking men, because he was the victim of the tyranny and injustice of the English. He tried hard to live on terms of peace with them, but they tried to fleece him more and more. He had paid them 20 lakhs of rupees in hard cash ; given them the revenues of three fertile districts of Bengal ; permitted them to coin their own siccas and allowed their circulation in his dominions without paying any *batta* on them. But they were very rapacious and grasping—nothing could satisfy their hunger for gold. They wanted to deprive him of the trade duties and subject his people to misery and ruin by taking in their hands the whole trade of the country. Even then he tried to come to terms with them ; but they were not satisfied with those terms. It was they who took the offensive and provoked him into hostilities. As Mir Kasim wrote and said so often, the war was not of his own seeking but was forced on him by them ; and if they succeeded in getting the better of him, it was not by fair fight; but by treachery, corruption and fraud.

THE LAST DAYS OF MIR KASIM

Mr. Brajendranath Banerji read a paper on the last days of Mir Kasim, based on unpublished State Records,—at the tenth public meeting of the Indian Historical Records Commission, held at Rangoon in December, 1927. The following extracts are taken from that paper:

Ever since Qasim's flight from the field of Buxar, the English had been trying to get him outlawed and driven out of every refuge. They kept themselves well informed of the movements of Qasim Ali through the medium of Shitab Roy (Nazim of Bihar) and the Rajah of Benares. Burning to avenge the massacre of the English prisoners at Patna, they were eager to get hold of the person of the *ex*-Nawab, and therefore they issued a proclamation that whoever would deliver Qasim Ali up to the English would receive from them a reward of a lakh of Rupees besides other marks of favour.

Qasim Ali, failing in all his attempts,—even his piteous appeals to the Nizam and the Ahmad Shah Abdali being of no avail—as a last resort turned towards Delhi, where he fondly hoped to receive the support of the Mughal Emperor.

Qasim Ali took up his residence outside the city of Delhi and sought for an audience with the Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam II. But the latter was ringed round by people who were eager to advance their own ends by betraying the *ex*-Nawab to the English. Majd-ud-daula, the deputy wazir of the Emperor, maintained a secret correspondence with Lieut-Col. Cummings, then commanding a British army in Upper India. Genl. Clavering, the Commander-in-Chief, placed before the Board the following letter from the Delhi minister—both in his own and his master's name—forwarded by Lieut. Col. Cummings, offering to deliver Qasim Ali into the hands of the English :

"............You, my friend, may have heard from report that Qasim Ali Khan is arrived here with a view of paying his respect to His Majesty and of remaining at the Presence. As I learnt that the English chiefs were displeased with him I did not introduce him, and he remains in distress

without the city. I have repeatedly written to the Nawab Asaf-ud-daula, that as His Excellency is coming to the Presence and will be accompanied by the chiefs, whatever measures will give pleasure and satisfaction to the English chiefs regarding Qasim Ali Khan shall be carried into execution. His Majesty has also said—' At the time that we resided at Allahabad, the English chiefs petitioned us, that if Qasim Ali Khan came into our power, we would keep him under our authority.' At this time, in spite of prohibitions, and in opposition to the pleasure and orders of his Majesty communicated to him in repeated shukkas sent to interdict him, he is arrived......"

Such an offer could not but be acceptable to the Board, who accordingly directed Lieut-Col. Cummings (3rd January, 1776) to accept the offer made to him, and to express its acknowledgments to the King for this token of his favour to the Company which the Board considered as a mark of his regard for the British nation and a manifest instance of his great and impartial justice. In case the Commanding Officer succeeded in seizing the person of Qasim Ali, he was instructed to keep the hero of the Patna massacre under a strong guard, pending further orders from the Board.

Mir Qasim, however, was quite alert and further, some of the minister's letters to the English commander were seized by his people, which increased his suspicion and made him more cautious about himself.

Authorized by the Board at Calcutta, Lieut.-Col. Cummings addressed both the Emperor of Delhi and his minister (20th January 1776) on the subject of the seizure of Qasim Ali Khan. But the English very soon realized that there was no sincerity in the offer made to them by Majd-ud-daula. * The Emperor of Delhi was extremely unwilling to betray his old ally and co-religionist to the English even though by so doing he could have proved his devotion to the British interests. Neither could that impecunious monarch venture to give an asylum to an avowed enemy of the English, lest they should, on the ground of his unfriendliness, stop the payment of the Bengal tribute, which was already in arrears.

Fortune turned against Qasim Ali. His followers were falling off and the chances of a personal interview with the Emperor seemed remote. He now thought of appealing to the Governor-General's sense of justice in order to purge himself of the imputations thrown on him by others. Perhaps his idea was only to feel the pulse of the English. Colonel Stibbert, the commanding officer at Bilgram, received from him the following letter :—

"Language is too weak to express the earnestness of my desire to enjoy the pleasure of a personal interview with you. I shall, therefore, not attempt it, but proceed to the principal design of this address. When I first heard that his lordship and the other sardars and gentlemen appointed by the King of England for the regulation of the affairs of all Hindustan (and who have since enlightened this part of the world with their presence) were on their passage, the news thereof inspired me with the utmost joy. The searcher of all hearts is witness that wherever I am, I am continually engaged in the pleasing employment of repeating the praises of the English as well for the wisdom of their councils, as for their equitable and friendly dispositions. I have the firmest conviction from that justice and equity which are inherent in the character of the English that they will never deviate from the paths of right. I have no ambition of dominion, the utmost of my desire is that the indignation which through the representations of my enemies has been kindled in the breasts of the English against me should be extinguished by the waters of equity, and that regarding me who wish only for justice, as one of their friends and sincere well-wishers, a correspondence should be renewed between us. Let it not be thought an extraordinary or exaggerated declaration that if you will shew this small favour to me (a dependent on your beneficence, who having quitted the place of my nativity and the residence of my family for a century, have wandered about the country in a forlorn condition for these twelve years), as to bring the

* "By advices from Colonel Cummings subsequent to the date of our last letter, we have reason to think there was no sincerity in the offer of His Majesty's Minister to deliver up Qasim Ali Khan but that he wrote to Colonel Cummings merely to amuse him."—*General Secret Letter from Bengal to the Company*, dated 26th March 1776, para, 35. (India Office Records).

whole affair to a candid and equitable enquiry, and [if] the least crime is then proved against me, I will submit to lose my head as a satisfaction to my friends. If you, induced by the goodness of your disposition, consent to oblige me by a strict enquiry into the merits and demerits of my cause and will communicate such intention to me, I will send a person to you with a particular detail of every circumstance from first to last. You my friend who are a man of knowledge and experience in the world will weigh the whole in the balance of wisdom, and exert yourself so effectually in my favour that I may obtain justice. By the blessing of God I will not this time be wanting in the performance of the duties incumbent on me, and I will exert myself so effectually for the interest of the English that great pecuniary advantages shall accrue to them thereof. What can I write more ?

N. B.—The address on this letter is to General Smith, Jalal-ud-din Jang Roshan-ud-daula Bahadur."*

Colonel Stibbert did not take it upon himself to reply to the letter but submitted it to the consideration of the Board (6th March).

On 8th June 1776 Hastings received from Qasim Ali a very long letter congratulating him on his being appointed Governor-General, and hoping that he might now expect justice.†

To what extremities Mir Qasim, once the master of millions, was reduced, is thus described by a contemporary :

"Qasim Ali Khan, after several adventures, and flying from one place to another, has at last taken up his residence at Palwal, a small town, 20 *kos* from hence, on the high road from Agra to Delhi. There in a miserable tent, surrounded by a couple of tattered walls, does he, with a suite of about fifty attendants, drag on a wretched life. He is very studious to keep up the appearance of misery and poverty, and this to prevent any attack from robbers, great and small. He has, I believe, a small pension from Najaf Khan, though not openly ; and he lives on that, and on some effects which he from time to time disposes of. Part of his time is taken up in dressing his own victuals (which office he trusts to nobody else), and in his correspondence ; and the rest is invariably dedicated to judicial astrology, By the stars does he regulate all his conduct : and he is fully persuaded, that, from their influence, and from a due knowledge of it, he will be enabled, one day or other, to remount the *masnad* either of Bengal or Delhi, no matter which, with tenfold power and glory. In that pleasing hope I shall leave him. It is not improbable that before long, some one or other will make away with him, in expectation of plundering his effects. His brother, or cousin, Boo Ali Khan, is here ; more, I believe, as a spy upon me and others, than for anything else. However, I have kept hitherto so much on the side of indifference, that I believe he no longer suspects me as he did at first. So much for that hero."§

Qasim Ali tried once more to have an audience with the Emperor Shah Alam II, whom he now petitioned as follows :

"Expresses his earnest desire of presenting himself before the royal throne. Says that he has been reduced to misery owing to misunderstanding with the English created by the treachery of some of his own dependants. Has been an exile for 12 years and in seeking refuge he has been stripped of all that he possessed by his treacherous servants at the instigation of Nawab Shuja-ud-daula, Prays that he may be given an office in the Royal Court." (August 1776).

Mir Qasim had perhaps counted too much upon the assistance of his coreligionists—the Emperor of Delhi and the Nawab of Oudh, as well as his own people,—and it broke his heart when every

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* Letter from Nawab Ali Jah (Qasim Ali Khan) to Col. Stibbert, Camp near Belgram.—*Secret Proceedings,* 2nd May 1776, pp. 1558-60, also p. 1544.

† *Eng. Abstracts of Persian Letters Received,* 1776. Neither the original Persian, nor the English translation of this letter,.is available in the Persian section of the Imperial Record Office.

§ Letter from Major Polier at Delhi, to Colonel Ironside at Belgram, dated 22nd May 1776.—*Asiatic Annual Register,* 1800, Mis. Tracts, pp. 34-36,

one of them refused to stand by him in his time of need. Thus placed, Mir Qasim Ali became anxious to regain the friendship of the English.

Mir Qasim vainly wrote to the English, assigning a long string of reasons why he should be taken into their favour again (29th August).

Tired of leading a life of exile and sick of dragging on a wretched existence, Qasim Ali wistfully desired death as a welcome release from his miseries. He was seized with a lingering illness which culminated in his death on 7th June 1777. He thus succeeded in baffling all the attempts of the English to seize his person in order to gratify their revenge. The announcement of his death occurs in a letter from the Resident at the Court of Nawab Asaf-ud-daula :—

"By intelligence, just now received from the Court of Delhi, I am informed of the death of Qasim Ali Khan, the late Subah of Bengal, who after a lingering illness of some months, expired the 7th instant. I do myself the pleasure to enclose the Hon'ble Board an extract of the intelligence transmitted me." *

The paper of intelligence mentioned here cannot be traced. Major Polier, however, gives the following account of Mir Kasim's death in a letter to Colonel Ironside :

"Qasim Ali Khan is at last dead and buried. His demise was at Delhi, on the 29th of the moon Rabi-us-sani, that is, on the 6th June 1777. It is said he died in great misery, and that his last shawl was sold to pay for his winding-sheet. The King's people immediately plundered all his cattle and movables, and placed his women and children under confinement ; however, the whole was given up again at Najaf Khan's intercession, and two of his children are come to this camp under Najaf Khan's protection......." †

Thus died Mir Kasim, the last independent Nawab of Bengal who, so to speak, made the supreme sacrifice in an attempt to save the Indian merchants from imminent ruin.

There is good reason to believe that early in 1776 Lieut. Col. Cummings informed the Delhi Minister that it was desirable in the opinion of that British officer that the Minister should somehow tempt Mir Kasim to the Court of the Emperor of Delhi by dangling before him favors of various kinds to be shown to him by His Majesty, it being understood that when Mir Kasim had been thus ensnared to Delhi he would be either put to death or kept a prisoner for life.

* Letter from Nath. Middleton, to the Governor-General and Council, dated Lucknow, 11th June, 1777.—*Secret Proceedings*, 30th June, 1777, pp. 1036-37.

† *Asiatic Annual Register*, 1800, Mis. Tracts, p. 36.

CHAPTER IV

RESTORATION OF MIR JAFAR

The Council at Calcutta issued on the 7th July, 1763, the following proclamation :—

"The Nawab *Meer Mahomed Cossim Alee Cawn* having entered upon and continued acts of open hostility against the English nation and the interest of the English united East India Company, we, on their behalf are reduced to the necessity of declaring war against him and having come to a resolution of placing the Nawab *Mir Muhammed Jaffier Khan Bahadur* again in the Government we now proclaim and acknowledge him as Subahdar of the provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa ; and further as the said *Cossim Allee Cawn* has likewise exercised acts of violence and oppressions over many of the principal merchants and inhabitants of the country, to their entire ruin, we do hereby require all manner of persons under our jurisdiction, and also invite all other officers and inhabitants of the country, to repair to the standard of *Mir Mahommed Jaffier Cawn Bahadur*, to assist him in defeating the designs of the said *Cossim Alee Cawn*, and finally establishing himself in the Subahdaree."

It is needless to point out the lies with which the above proclamation opens in its very first sentence. It was not Mir Kasim, but Ellis who entered upon and continued acts of open hostility. By restoring Mir Jafar to the throne of Bengal, the English in a way acknowledged the wrong and injustice they had done him. So in all fairness his restoration should have been accompanied with some compensation to him for the losses he had been made to suffer. But magnanimity and generosity are virtues which the English were strangers to. Nay, they restored Mir Jafar to the masnad of Bengal in order to extort some more concessions and money from him. The terms of the new treaty they concluded with him were highly advantageous to them. Elphinstone writes :

"Although the majority treated the reinstatement of this prince as a restoration to his just rights, they did not scruple to impose new and severe terms upon him. All the concessions made by Kaslm Ali were retained, the whole of the commercial privileges claimed by the Company's servants were insisted on, the force to be kept up by the Nabob was limited to 6,000 horse and 12,000 foot, and he was to indemnify the Company and individuals for all the damage occasioned to them by the usurper whom their own government had set up to supplant him. By a separate agreement he was to grant a donation of twenty-five lacks of rupees to the army and some gratification to the navy, which was not fixed at the time." *

Mir Jafar was made use of as an useful tool by the English in their war with Mir Kasim. He accompanied their army and was with them at Udhua Nala. It was in his name that promises were made to tempt the men of Mir Kasim's army to desert their prince and come to the former Nawab's camp.

But with all these it can be very easily surmised that Mir Jafar's lot was not a happy one. His situation as the restored Nawab was much worse than it had been before.

Rise of the British Power in India, p. 397.

At the time of his restoration, Mir Jafar insisted on having Nandakumar as his Dewan. He was at that time a prisoner at Calcutta under the English. So he had to be set at liberty to serve Mir Jafar. - He served him very faithfully and did all that lay in his power to advance his master's cause.

Mir Jafar did not live long to enjoy the Nawabship.

As said before, he was being treated much worse than he had been during the first period of his Nawabship. He submitted to the Calcutta Board a paper containing his complaints. This was received by the Board on the 14th September, 1764, and in it he wrote:

"1. The officers of Colonel-gunge and Maroogunge which are newly established at Patna, take away by force the merchants belonging to the Gunges of the Sircar, by which means my Gunges are desolated and I suffer a loss of a Lac of Rupees. It is proper that the aforesaid new Gunges should be forbidden, that the Gunges of the Sircar may flourish and I may not suffer any loss.

"2. The state of the Buddraca [Cutcherihs into which the Government duties are paid] of Patna and the Putchootra of Moorshedabad is this, that Merchants refuse to pay the customary duties under cover of the protection of the English Factories. Be pleased to send positive orders that they should pay the customary duties into the aforesaid cutcherries and that no protection should be granted to any one.

"3. Whereas in Sircar Tirhut, and Sircar Hajypoor and Sircar Sarun, &c., and also in the Bengal province, the English Gomastahs hold farms in the name of factories and give protection to the dependants of the Sircar; by these means my Government is weakened and the affairs of the country are interrupted and prejudiced. . . .

"4. Money belonging to the Company's factory is coined in the Mint at the rate of 2¼ per cent only. Last year it was appointed that 10,000 Rupees a month should be sent from the factory to the Mint to be coined, and that the usual duty should be paid. At present very large sums are brought into the Mint from the factory by the servants and dependants of the factory, and a duty is paid according to the factory rate, whereby a heavy loss falls upon the Sircar. . ,

"5. The villages of Dumdumma and Seebpoor. . .and the village of Bummun-gutta with other villages.................the Gomastahs of Cassimbazar factory have forcibly taken possession of, and do not pay a cowrie Malgoozary................

"6. The English Gomastahs......force Tobacco and other goods upon the Talookdars and Ryots, whereby the country is desolated and a very heavy loss falls upon the Sircar.............

"7. There are people on the part of the English in the Forts of Patna and Monghyr, &c., whereby my authority is impaired. It is proper that the English should move out of the Forts and my people be established therein as usual ;...............

"8. The people of several Englishmen everywhere buy and sell rice and other grain in the Gunges and Golas of Bengal, whereby the foujdars and other officers are prevented from sending grain to the army..........

"9. In Patna.........near 40 houses designed for the reception of strangers are in the possession of several English gentlemen, so that I could not have them in case I should want them for myself and my family and dependents.........

"10. The wood Farm belonging to Poornea, which has hitherto paid a tribute of 50,000 Rupees a year, is now in the hands of the English, and I received not a cowrie from it, whereby I suffer a heavy loss, and my authority is weakened..........

"11. If any of the servants or dependents of the sircar should seek for protection from the English, let it be enacted that no person shall give protection to the dependents of the sircar or recommend the servants.

"12. "The Sepoys, who are sent from the factories into different parts of the country in conse-

quence of complaints, desolate the villages and put the ryots to flight by their disorders and oppressions, whereby my revenues are injured.........

"13. The poor of this country, who used always to deal in salt, betel-nut and tobacco, &c., are now deprived of their daily bread by the trade of the Europeans, whereby no kind of advantage accrues to the Company and the Government revenues are greatly injured." *

Mir Jafar formulated his complaints against the Company of Christian merchants under the above thirteen heads. His grievances were not sentimental but real and substantial. But as usual, the Company and their representatives in Bengal took no notice of them and so no redress was granted to him. He gained but little by his abject submissiveness, except the transmission of the title to his family.

THE COURT OF DIRECTORS ON THE INLAND TRADE

The Court of Directors had no interest in the Inland Trade and, therefore, they were able to pronounce their disinterested judgment on it. They of course condemned the action of the Board. It seems that the Court came to know of the Inland Trade from some private information. The following extracts from their letters to Bengal sufficiently disclose their views on the subject :

The Nawab to be Informed Accordingly

"Unwilling as we always are to place too much confidence in private informations, yet these are too important to pass unnoticed. If what is all stated is fact, it is natural to think that the Nawab, tired out and disgusted with the ill-usage he has received, has taken this extraordinary measure, finding that his authority and government are set at nought and trampled upon by the unprecedented behaviour of our servants and the agents employed by them in the several parts of the Nawab's dominions. If we are right in our conjecture, we positively direct, as you value our service, that you do immediately acquaint the Nawab, in the Company's name, that we dissapprove of every measure that has been taken in real prejudice to his authority and government, particularly with respect to the wronging him in his revenues by the shameful abuse of Dustucks ; and you are further to inform him that we look upon his and the Company's interest to be so connected that we wish for nothing more than to have everything put on such a footing that the utmost harmony may be promoted and kept up between us.

Colonel Caillaud Honourably Acquitted

"Having considered with the greatest attention every circumstance of your providings with respect to the allegation against Colonel Caillaud for consenting to a proposal of the late Nawab Jaffiar Ali Khan to cause the Shahzada to be seized or cut off, we are unanimously of opinion that he stands honourably acquitted of any design or intention upon or against the life of that Prince.

Disapproval of every measure taken against the Nawab

"Although we have not received any letter from you since that which bore date the 14th February 1763, which gave us some general account of very disaggreeable altercations with the Nawab, yet private advices have been received which take notice that the Nawab having made repeated complaints of the notorious abuse of Dustucks by which he lost great part of his customs, and having obtained no redress, he at once overset the Company's servants by declaring all goods custom free, so that their Dustucks are of no use.

* Long's *Selections*, pp. 356-358.

All the Nawab's Grievances to be Redressed

"In order to promote this harmony, you are most heartily and seriously to take under your consideration every real grievance the Nawab lays under, to redress them to the utmost of your power and prevent such abuses in future. And, with respect to the article of Dustucks in particular, you are hereby positively directed to confine this privilege as nearly as posible to the terms granted in the Firmans ; and you are to give the Nawab all the assistance you can to reinstate him in the full power of collecting and receiving his revenues, which as Subah he is justly entitled to.

Impatient for Further Intelligence

"We are impatient for your next advices, that we may be informed of your proceedings with respect to this important affair, and that we may give you our sentiments thereupon in a more full and explicit manner, which we hope will be before the despatch of our last letters this season.

Private Trade the Chief Cause of all the Misunderstanding with the Nawab

"One great source of the disputes, misunderstandings and difficulties which have occurred with the country Government, appears evidently to have taken its rise from the unwarrantable and licentious manner of carrying on the private trade by the Company's servants, their Gomastas, Agents, and others to the prejudice of the Subah, both with respect to his authority and the revenues justly due to him, the diverting and taking from his natural subjects the trade in the inland parts of the country, to which neither we nor any persons whatever dependent upon us, or under our protection, have any manner of right, and consequently endangering the Company's very valuable privileges. In order, therefore, to remedy all these disorders, we do hereby positively order and direct—

All Inland Trade to be Abolished

"That from the receipt of this letter, a final and effectual end be forthwith put to the inland trade in salt, betel nut, tobaccos, and in all other articles whatsoever produced and consumed in the country ; and that all Europeans and other agents or Gomastas who have been concerned in such trade be immediately ordered down to Calcutta, and not suffered to return or be replaced as such by any other persons.

Export and Import Trade Alone to be Duty Free

"That as our Firman privileges of being duty-free are certainly confined to the Company's export and import trade only, you are to have recourse to, and keep within, the liberty therein stipulated and given as nearly as can possibly be done. But, as by the connivance of the Bengal Government and constant usage, the Company's covenant servants have had the same benefit as the Company with respect to their export and import trade, we are willing they should enjoy the same, and that Dustucks be granted accordingly. But herein the most effectual care is to be taken that no excesses or abuses are suffered upon any account whatsoever, nor Dustucks granted to any others than our covenant servants as aforesaid. However, notwithstanding any of our former orders, no writer is to have the benefit of the Dustuck until he has served out his full term of five years in that station. Free merchants and others are not entitled to or to have the benefit of the Company's Dustucks, but are to pay the usual duties.

All Agents to be Abolished. All Trade to be carried on through the Company's Factories

"As no Agents or Gomastas are to reside on account of private trade at any of the inland parts of the country, all business on account of licensed private trade is to be carried on by and through the means of the Company's covenanted servants resident at the several subordinate Factories, as has been usual.

All Persons Acting Contrary to Orders to be Dismissed the Service

"We are under the necessity of giving the before-going orders in order to preserve the tranquility of the country and harmony with the Nawab. They are rather outlines than complete

directions, which you are to add to, and improve upon, agreeably to the spirit of, and our meaning in them, as far as may be necessary to answer the desired purpose. And if any person or persons are guilty of a contravention of them, be they whomsoever they may, if our own servants they are to be dismissed the service; if of others, the Company's protection is to be withdrawn, and you have the option of sending them forthwith to England if you judge the nature of the offence requires it."

But when the directors were ordering their servants to make amends to the injured Nawab, Mir Kasim was a fugitive from his country. He had fled to the dominions of the ruler of Oudh, whom he was instigating to invade Bengal and drive out the English from that part of India.

SHAH SHUJA'S WAR WITH THE ENGLISH.

Mir Kasim, as said before, entered the territory of the ruler of Oudh on the 4th December, 1763. Shah Shuja was the Nawab Vazir of the Mughal Empire. The Emperor Shah Alam had not yet gone to Delhi, but was staying at Allahabad and so Shah Shujah was in possession of his person. Under the circumstances, the ruler of Oudh was the virtual Emperor of Hindustan. It was, therefore, that Mir Kasim negotiated with him, and entered his territory after making him take a solemn oath on the Koran that he would espouse his cause and help him to regain the masnad of Bengal, Behar and Orissa.

Large were the presents which Mir Kasim made to Shah Shuja and his female relatives. * He addressed Shah Shuja's mother as his mother and so considered the ruler of Oudh as his brother. The raja of Bundelkhand was giving trouble to the sovereign of Hindustan by not paying the tribute. The Mughal Empire was *in extremis*, and so the Bundelkhand chief saw his opportunity to assert his independence. The Nawab had come to Allahabad in order to send an expedition against that chief. There was some delay in the despatch of the expedition. Perhaps the timid Vazir was not sure about its success and so he was procrastinating in its despatch. But Mir Kasim considered this delay as fatal to his cause. Writes the author of the *Seir* :

"As he feared nothing so much as a delay, the consequences of which might afford the English time enough to fix themselves firmly in their new conquests, he sent a pressing message to the Vizier on that subject. He was answered, that such an expedition could not be commenced, before the countries about Ilah-abad were brought into order. Mir Kasim replied, that if this was all that detained the Vizier, it was needless that he (Mir Kasim) should remain with so much artillery, and so many good troops uselessly encamped. Please, said he, to refer that small affair to me, *your friend, and I will undertake in a little time to bring it to a conclusion with a deal of ease.*" †

The proposal being accepted, Mir Kasim with his trained troops, did not find any difficulty in defeating the Bundekhand chief, who submitted to pay the arrears of his tribute. After his successful campaign he returned to Allahabad and the Emperor and the Vazir were so pleased with the manner in which he had conducted the expedition and brought it to a successful issue, that they acceded to his request and made every necessary preparation to march eastwards to fight the English.

Seir-ul-Mutakhierin, iv. 521 *et seq* (Calcutta reprint)

† *Ibid.*, II. 5[illegible].

Fortunately for Mir Kasim, dissensions had taken place in the camp of the English. Many European officers and soldiers as well as Indian Sepoys were deserting the Company's flag and were going over to the camp of the Vazir of the Emperor.* But unfortunately, there was no statesman on the Moslem side to take advantage of these dissensions and thus weaken the Christians. The troops of the Moslem rulers were also unruly and ungovernable. Writes the author of the *Seir*: †

"But there was so little order and discipline amongst these troops, and so little were the men accustomed to command, that in the very middle of the camp they fought against each other, killed and murdered each other, plundered each other, and went out a-plundering and a-marauding without the least scruple or the least control. No one would inquire into those matters ;..... They behaved exactly like a troop of highwaymen. It was not an army, but a whole city in motion ;......"

Another blunder of the troops of the Moslem rulers consisted in the heavy baggages which they carried with them. An Indian army to make itself comfortable always carries not only articles of necessity but also those of luxury with its camp, And this has been the cause of the disasters which have befallen many an army fighting in or out of India.

The war was undertaken with the express object of replacing Mir Kasim on the *masnad* of Bengal. Shuja-ud-daula wrote the following letter to the Governor and Council :

"Former Kings of *Indostan*, by exempting the *English* Company from duties, granting them different settlements and factories, and assisting them in all their affairs, bestowed greater kindness and honour upon them, than either upon the country merchants, or any other Europeans. Moreover of late his Majesty has graciously conferred on you higher titles and dignities than was proper, and jagheers and other favors since ; notwithstanding these various favors which have been shown you have interfered in the King's country, possessed yourselves of districts belonging to the Government, such as Burdwan and Chittagong, &c., and turned out and established Nabobs at pleasure, without the consent of the Imperial Court. Since you have imprisoned dependants upon the Court, and exposed the government of the King of Kings to contempt and dishonour, since you have ruined the trade of the merchants of the country, granted protection to the King's servants, injured the revenues of the Imperial Court, and crushed the inhabitants by your acts of violence ; and since you are continually sending fresh people from Calcutta, and invading different parts of the royal dominions, and have even plundereed several villages and pergunnahs belonging to the province of *Ilahabad* ; to what can all these wrong proceedings be attributed, but to an absolute disregard for the Court, and a wicked design of seizing the country for yourselves ? If you have behaved in this manner in consequenc of your king's commands, or the Company's directions, be pleased to acquaint me of the particulars thereof that I may show a suitable resentment ; but if these disturbances have arisen from your own improper desires, desist from such behaviour in future ; interfere not in the affairs of the government, withdraw your people from every part, and send them to your own country, carry on the Company's trade as formerly, and confine yourselves to commercial affairs. In this case the Imperial Court will more than ever assist you in your business, and confer its favours upon you. Send hither some person of distinction as your Vakeel, to inform me properly of all circumstances, that I may act accordingly. If (which God forbid) you are haughty and disobedient, the heads of the disturbers shall be devoured by the sword of justice, and you will feel the weight of his Majesty's displeasure, which is the type of the wrath of God ; nor will any submissions or acknowledgments of your neglect hereafter avail you, as your Company have of old been supported by the royal favours.

* *Ibid.*, ii 524. (Calcutta Reprint).

† *Ibid.*, p. 526.

I have therefore wrote to you, you will act as you may think advisable; speedily send me your answer."

It behoved Shuja as Vazir of the Mughal Empire to write to the English merchants in the tone which he adopted in the above letter. No one can deny that right as well as law was on the side of the Emperor. The English were trying to usurp his authority and power, and so it was necessary to tell them in the plainest language that they should desist from the path they were pursuing.

The English were frightened out of their wits when the Emperor and the Vazir with Mir Kasim invaded Behar. And they had very good reasons for being so. According to the *Seir*:

"The English, meanwhile, being much diminished in number, and much fatigued by so severe a campaign in the very height of the rainy season, had commenced flagging. Intimidated by Shula-ud-dowla's character for prowess, and impressed with an opinion of the bravery and number of his troops, they did not think themselves a match for them in the field. With this notion they repassed the Sohon, and resolved to retire within the walls of Azim-abad. The camp at Buxar was therefore raised, and they retreated with precipitation."*

The same author has also stated the cause of the failure of the Moslem troops. It was the misbehavior of those troops.

"Shuja-ud-dowla, with the Emperor and Mir Kasim in his company, marched on proudly and triumphantly ; and having advanced by continual marches, he entered the province of Azimabad, where his troops, burning and plundering to the distance of five or six cosses in every direction, did not leave a trace of population throughout all that tract of ground. The poor inhabitants, whose hearts had been expanded on hearing of the arrival of an Emperor and a Vazir, no sooner found themselves exposed to every kind of insult and oppression, than they returned their heartiest thanks to the English, and prayed to God for their prosperity and return ;......"†

Major Adams, the officer in command of the Company's troops, having died in December 1763, a few days after the defeat and expulsion of Mir Casim from Behar, the command of those troops devolved on Major Carnac. That officer was notoriously hostile to Mir Kasim. It is quite conceivable that he must have strained every nerve to bring about his ruin. He must have tried to create dissensions amongst the Moslem chiefs and nobles attached to or in command of troops. The English also intrigued with them. The author of the *Seir* was perhaps the medium through whom the English were carrying on their intrigues. He writes:

"I resolved to attach myself to the English, for whom I had this long while conceived an affection. I had even some connections with them ; especially with Doctor Fullarton,.......Some correspondence had also subsisted between him and me ; and it was by that means he had informed me that the Emperor inclined to the English party in his heart. He had likewise advised me early to provide for myself and for that Prince's reaching the English camp. This intelligence I imparted to my father, and I exhorted him to take the lead in an affair that would establish our family, and entitle him to the gratitude of that nation. I added, that it was evident that so long as the Vazir continued to command such unruly troops, and to be at variance with his confederates, as well as to turn a deaf ear to every sober advice, he would not be likely to prevail against the English ; that matters standing in such a predicament, it would be advantageous to join a nation that seemed to entertain a

* *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 528.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 528.

veneration for the Imperial person, and an inclination for its interests, both which they expressed everywhere in their correspondence with me, in such a manner, as rendered it proper and expedient for that Prince to write to the ruler of that nation, such a letter as they seemed to wish for."*

The English having intrigued with the Emperor and presumably other leaders of the Moslem army, it is not difficult to imagine the real cause of Shuja's failure.†

The rest of the story of the war is very easily told. When the Vazir saw that the good fortune of his refugee, Mir Kasim, was on the wane, he forgot the promise which he had made him. The author of the *Seir* relates the manner in which the Nawab Vazir of Oudh ordered the arrest of Mir Kasim.§ That writer rightly calls the Court of the Oudh prince "faithless." There was an opportunity for Mir Kasim to do away with Shujah-ud-daulah. But he did not take advantage of it. Writes the English translator of the *Seir*, Mr. Raymond, the French convert to Islam, that Mir Kasim had Shuja-ud-daula in his power, when it would have been very easy to have struck a mighty blow.

"Mir-Kasim being then encamped about Banares, Shudjah-ed-doulah, who had fatigued himself with hunting, plunged into the Ganges to bathe, and in the same breath, took into his head to pay him a visit. With a dozen of attendants, he got into a boat and crossed over. This was a critical moment; it was remarked by many of Mir Kassem's servants, who pointed to the opportunity of making away with that Prince instantly, after which his army, destitute of a leader, would soon be brought over. I am not a *moxi, a perfide, an injurer,* answered Mir Kasim. *let him come alone, if he will; he will be no less safe from all double dealings*"**

So the conduct of the Oudh Prince towards Mir Kasim was mean, base and cowardly. It was easy for the English to corrupt the Moslem army, for there were dissensions in the camp of the latter,†† of which they took immediate advantage

* *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 535.

† The defeat of Mir Kasim and the Vazir's and the Emperor's army was, to a certain extent, caused by the treachery of Maharaja Kalyan Singh, son of Raja Shitab Rai. He was in the employ of the Vazir but gave information regarding the number and movement of troops military resources and other matters of his employer to the officers of the East India Company. He is not ashamed to write:

"From this place (Phulwari) hostilities commenced and skirmishes were fought between the outposts of the opposing armies........Rai Sadho Ram, the clerk of Maharajah Shitab Rai, who was in Azimabad at the time, came to see me at Phulwari........I asked him further to give assurance to the English officials and Mir Muhammad Jafar Khan that I was with them and was on the look-out to find an opportunity to turn the tide in their favour. Rai Sadho Ram conveyed the message and returned to me informing me that both the English and the Nawab were pleased to get the message of sympathy and hope that they fully relied on me and accepted my assurance." (*J. B & O. R. S.*, VI, pp. 148-149).

§ Vol. II, p. 538.

** *Ibid.*, p. 549, footnote 291.

†† Thus one Zein-ul-Abudin wrote a letter to Major Munro, received in Calcutta, 22nd September 1764, in which he wrote :—

"I have had the honor to receive by the means of Ussud Khan Bahadre your friendly letter expressing your desire that I should join you with as many able-bodied and well-mounted horsemen, Moguls, Tooranies, as I can.

"Sir, although it is very dishonorable to all men, particularly to persons of family, to desert the service they are engaged in, and go over to their Master's enemies, yet there are several

by the manner in which they got possession of the Fort of Rotas. The author of the *Seir,* Syed Gholam Hussain Khan, to ingratiate himself with the English, proved a traitor to his country and managed to give the English the possession of that important fort. That Moslem is not ashamed to write :

"Major Munro, a king's servant, who had been appointed by the Council of Calcutta to the Command-in-Chief of the English forces, was just landed at Azim-abad, from whence he had wrote me by the channel of Doctor Fullarton.

'That if I could contrive to put the fortress of Rohotas in the hands of the English, I would entitle myself to their friendship and gratitude.'

"Upon this intimation I applied to Raja Sahomul, a man who had the greatest obligations to our family...and I informed him, that it was not in the nature of things that the English should not prevail, shortly, and shortly should not overthrow and ruin the Vezir, and his confederates ; that it was incumbent upon him therefore to examine the respective circumstances of both parties and to take his resolution betimes ;......"

The Governor of the Fort fell into the snares of the wily Moslem traitor. He agreed to deliver it into the hands of the English under certain conditions. All those conditions were approved of by the English and so the fort was delivered to them. But with characteristic faithlessness they did not fulfil those conditions. The injured Governor of Rotas wrote to Ghulam Hussain complaining of the conduct of the English

"that not one of the stipulated conditions had been observed with him."*

Shuja-ud-daula had to raise the siege of Azimabad (Patna), and returned to Buxar, where he intended to spend the rainy season. Mir Jafar also returned to Calcutta to settle certain matters with the English. It has been already said that on his restoration Mir Jafar had insisted on Nandkumar being made his minister. The English had very reluctantly acceded to his request. And now the English attributed all the blame of their failure to the intrigues and machinations of Nandkumar. There was scarcity of grain and money in the Nawab's camp and this was attributed to Nandkumar's intrigues. At a consultation held on 3rd April 1764, it was recorded by Vansittart and others :

"And as we have had too frequent experience of this man's intriguing disposition, and are certain that he has many connections in Shuja Dowla's Court, we have reason to suspect that he will employ these connections, at so critical a juncture as this, against our government, as a security for himself in all circumstances :—That we cannot be too much on our guard against any such designs, and we should wish therefore to have him entirely removed from the Nabob's service."

circumstances which justify such a conduct in us. For instance, Shuja-ul-dowla, notwithstanding his oath upon the Koran, murdered the Nabob Mahomed Cooly Khan.......

"Secondly, his behavior to the Nabob Cossim Aly Khan, who was a Syed and a descendant of the Prophet, has been very shameful.........

"The assisting and supporting of such an oppressor is neither conformable to reason, nor to the Koran, nor to the rules of any religion, and the quitting his service can reflect no dishonour upon any one, either in the sight of God or man......" (Long's *Selections,* pp. 358-359).

* *Mutakhierin,* pp. 553-554.

The English of Calcutta bore malice against Nandkumar, because he saw through their nefarious designs and tried his best to safeguard the interests of his master against them. It is recorded by the author of the *Seir*, that on his retirement from the governorship,

"to guard his successors as much as possible against this man's (Nandkumar's) dangerous character, and endless intrigues, he (Mr. Vansittart) wrote a memoir upon him, got it bound in the form of a book, and kept it for use."*

It is only necessary to mention that Major Carnac, who was with Mir Jafar in the field, did not consider the Nawab to be influenced by Nandkumar but one *Roy Dulab*.† So the suspicion against Nandkumar seems to have been ill-founded.§

The Nawab was naturally anxious to negotiate with the Emperor and Shuja-ud-daula. This conduct of the Nawab was even defended by Major Carnac, who in his letter, dated 5th June 1764, wrote to the Calcutta Committee that it was

"*very natural the Nabob should be very desirous of holding the* Nezamut *by virtue of the* Royal Phirmaund, the religion as well as education of all *Musselmen* teaching them to regard this as the only regular constituted Authority ;"**

But this gave great offence to the Calcutta English, who had made Mir Jafar a puppet in their hands to serve their selfish designs. Mir Jafar was to be fleeced and bled and therefore they demanded that he should immediately return to Calcutta from the front. This order Mir Jafar had to obey.

The Calcutta English were not also satisfied with the conduct of Major Carnac. So they were desirous of superseding him by another military officer. For this purpose they brought Major Munro from Bombay. He arrived in Calcutta towards the end of June 1764 and was at once ordered to proceed to Patna to take the command of the troops, where he arrived some time in the month of July. He signalised his arrival at Patna by blowing from the mouth of guns sepoys alleged to have mutinied. No inquiry was made as to their grievances, and no attempt to remove them.

Major Munro had instructions to proceed against Shuja-ud-daula, prosecute the war with vigour and bring it to an early termination. It was feared that had there been delay in terminating the war, Shuja would have received help from the Marathas and Afghans. So the battle of Buxar was fought on September 15, 1764. Shuja was defeated with great loss. According to the translator of the *Seir* :

"Five or six thousand men perished or were slain in the action, but ten thousand or more stuck

* Vol. II, p. 557.

† Third Report, p. 378.

§ Major Carnac in his letter of the 16th May 1764 to Calcutta which was read at the Consultation of 24th May wrote :

"That *Nand Coomar's* late behaviour has been such as to remove almost entirely the suspicion of his being engaged in treachery, however faulty he may have been in other particulars ; that ever since the appearance of the enemy he has, by his master's and his own earnest request, kept close to him (the Major), which is a strict argument that he was not concerned in any treasonable practices, as he was under his eye, and could not of consequence himself reap any advantage therefrom." [Third Report, p. 378].

** *Ibid*, p. 378.

in the mire, or perished, in the retreat; and two years after, the town of Buxar, the fields, and the muddy shores of the river, for miles together, were beset with bones." *

The day before the battle, Mir Kasim was set at liberty by Shuja. He left the encamping ground on an elephant and was thus saved. For had he fallen into the hands of the English, the tortures that he would have been subjected to can be very easily conjectured.

The English were perhaps all the time intriguing with the Emperor. † So after the battle the Emperor separated from Shuja and encamped near the British lines.

The English tried to conclude peace with Shuja; the Nawab Vazir was required to deliver into their hands Mir Kasim and Somro as terms of the peace. According to the author of the *Seir,* the Emperor's minister's answer to the proposal was as follows:

"That Somro being master of a good body of troops, and such as had not broke their ranks in the last defeat, but had retreated in good order, the seizing that man's person would not be free from danger. But that Mir Cassem might be arrested: and if the Vezir should approve of it. his own endeavours would not be wanting in that business."

The author of the *Seir* informed Mir Kasim the terms on which the English agreed to make peace with Shuja. The quondam Nawab of Bengal had, in order to save himself from the revenge of the Company's servants, to run away as fast as he could from the vicinity of the encampment of the Engltsh.

Mir Kasim now disappears from the pages of history, although he lived till 1777, when he died at Delhi.§

Somro also, knowing the fate that might any day befall him, left the service of the Oudh prince and made haste to join with his battallion the Jats of Agra.

As the terms on which the English consented to make peace with Shuja were not

* Vol. II, p. 569 (footnote)

† Ibid, p. 571.

§ In the Introduction to the Third Volume of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* (pp. xiii *et seq),* Maulvi Badrudin Ahmad writes that the fugitive Nawab Mir Qasim in 1765 invited Ahmad Shah Abdali to come and help him.

"On 2nd February 1767 the Governor received a letter from Muhammad Riza Khan, informing him that Ahmad Shah had crossed the Attock and was 120 miles from Lahore..,........At this time Raghunath Rao, uncle to the young Peshwa Madhu Rao, was in Hindustan revaging the country of the Jats................

"While the Mahrattas were following their traditional occupation of plunder and rapine, Ahmed Shah entered India with a large army...........It is hardly possible to doubt that the rumour was true which said that Mir Kasim had invited him to India, and that the Shah's object was not merely to punish the refractory Sikhs but to restore Mir Kasim to the throne of Murshidabad........In 1761 the conqueror had justified his invasion by his triumph over the Mahrattas. What should be his object this time? Most likely the expulsion of the English and the restoration of an 'oppressed, fugitive and homeless' Nawab. But a great change had taken place in the political situation in India. In 1759 all the Muhammadan chiefs of Hindustan were on his side; now the most powerful of them all, Nawab Shujah'u'd-Daulah, stood aloof and was actually leagued with the very power whom he might have engaged in battle. The Shah was not prepared to meet a confederacy of the English, the Vizir and the Sikhs. He therefore gave a curt reply to Mir Kasim, and returned to his country."

complied with, they pushed on and tried to carry the war into the country of the Oudh prince.

The English besieged the strong fortress of Chunar. But they were miserably repulsed. They did not try to gain the fortress of Chunar; so they raised the siege and marched on to Allahabad, as they had received intelligence of Shuja advancing against them.

Fortunately for them Najaf Khan, whose daring deeds at Udhua Nala have already been narrated before, joined the English at this juncture, and so with his assistance, they succeeded in capturing the fort of Allahabad. *

Shuja also like Mir Kasim fled to Bareilly, where he was hospitably received by the Rohilla ruler. But he did not give up all ideas of fighting the English. The famous Maratha General Mulhar Rao Holkar, with the disciplined troops under him, joined Shuja at Cora in the latter's attack on the English. The Oudh prince was expecting help from the Rohillas, but the latter did not join him. There were a few skirmishes, in which Shuja was worsted, and so the whole of his dominions had to submit to the English. He was advised to repair to the English camp, which he did without any safe conduct; but he was received there in a respectful manner by General Carnac, who had again assumed the command of the troops, as Major Munro had left Bengal for his native land. Through the mediation of Shitab Roy, Shuja concluded a peace with the English on the following terms.

"That to discharge the expenses of the war, Shuja-ud-doulah would pay fifty lakhs of rupees to the English in the following manner: Twenty-five lacs constant, and twenty-five lacs by assignments upon the future revenues of his country; under condition, however, that any contributions which the English might have already raised in them, should be deemed parts of the assigned sums. That the province of Ilah-abad should be set apart for the sole use of the Emperor; and that the city and fortress of that name should be assigned for his residence. . . .That a body of English troops should remain at Ilah-abad to guard the Emperor's person; and that an Englishman on the part of the English nation, should reside at Shuja-ud-doulah's court, in the quality of Vekil or agent, and Mian-dji or go-between, but without power to meddle with that Prince's affairs. That after the conclusion of this treaty, the friends and enemies of one party should be deemed the friends and enemies of the other; . . ."†

Thus ended the war of Shuja with the English. They mulcted Shuja not only of a large amount of money but also of his territory. The fair province of Ghazipur was wrested from him—a measure which was not approved of by the Directors of the East India Company, who in their letter to Bengal, dated 24th December, 1765, wrote:

"The war having been begun against Cossim Ally Khan, we approve the measures you took in conducting it, till the battle of Buxar. But the demand of the *Gauzepoor* country, the undertaking to conquer *Souza Dowla's* country for the King, and the treaty you have made with him, we shall give our opinion of separately.........to demand the *Gauzepoor* country, a frontier surrounded with warlike People, we conceive was a Measure by no Means adequate to the end proposed, and absolutely a contradiction to our repeated Directions not to extend our Possessions."§

* Seir, II. 579.

† *Seir*, Vol. II, p. 584.

§ Third Report, p. 382.

THE LAST DAYS OF MIR JAFAR

A traitor can never be a happy creature, for he can never command respect even from those for whose sake he commits treachery.

Such was the case with Mir Jaffar. His life was altogether miserable and made more so by his Christian friends, under whose spell he had betrayed his co-religionist Shiraj-ud-daula. He was used as a ladder by the English and as soon as they had succeeded to attain to the height of their ambition or rather selfish end, they kicked him off without mercy or any scruple. He was made to serve their vile interests and they made his last days very miserable. The appendix to the third report on the Nature, State and Condition of the East India Company contains minutes of the consultations of the Calcutta merchants and shows how they were bent upon ill-treating Mir Jafar.*

The indecent manner in which the English forced their demands on him hastened his death. This even Sir William W. Hunter, steeped in the traditions of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, is compelled to admit. In his account of Murshidabad he writes :

"His death took place in January 1765, and is said to have been hastened by the unseemly importunity with which the English at Calcutta pressed upon him their private claims to restitution."†

The Moslem traitor in his last hours did not receive any solace and comfort from his own co-religionists, or from any Christians, whom some Muhammadans from interested motives are in the habit of calling "People of the Book," but from a Hindu, that is, a "heathen." That heathen was the well-known Nandkumar. The author of the *Seir*, a bigoted Moslem and no friend of Mir Jafar, says that that Moslem died a "Gentoo." For Nandkumar brought the holy water from a Hindu temple and poured it down Mir Jafar's throat and also washed his body with it.

* Third report, p. 306.

† Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. ix, p. 191.

CHAPTER V.

EVENTS SUCCEEDING MIR JAFAR'S DEATH

Mir Jafar died on 5th February 1765 at Murshidabad. But before his death Vansittart had resigned the Governorship of Bengal and sailed for his native country, delivering the management of Indian affairs into the hands of one Spencer, a Bombay Civilian. The affairs of the Company in Bengal were not in a flourishing condition. To put their affairs on a sound footing the Directors asked Lord Clive to go out to India. Vansittart did not like the idea of being superseded by Clive and so he resigned before his arrival.

It was during the Governorship of Spencer that Mir Jafar died. The treaty which was imposed on that Moslem traitor by the English did not make any mention about his successor after his death. So the English were not going to lose the opportuity without improving their position in the country.

According to Caraccioli, Munni Begam, the principal Begam of Mir Jafar, heavily bribed the chiefs of the English Company in order to secure the succession for her son. The Council at Calcutta disallowed the claim of the minor son of Mir Jafar's only legitimate offspring Miran, and raised Najm-ud-daula, a boy of 15, to the throne.* But before he was recognised by the English Government of Calcutta as Nawab, they forced a new treaty on him, in which such terms were introduced as changed the relation between the two Governments. The Nawab was required to appoint a naib or deputy for the management of all affairs under him and they insisted that Muhammad Raza Khan, who was known to be favorably disposed towards the English, should be appointed to this office.

Another clause of the new treaty made it obligatory on the Nawab to make the election and removal of all the principal officers in the revenue department subject to the approval of the Government of Calcutta. The payment of five lacs for the maintenance of the Company's army was to be continued, and the Nawab bound himself not to keep any troops himself, except for purposes of state and for the collection of the revenue. The English were also exempted from duties in all parts of the country.

These terms were of course not palatable to the Nawab; but his objections were of no avail. He had to yield and had to pay the penalty for the treachery of his father. He had to sign the treaty and with it also pay presents of 20 lacs to the members of the Calcutta Government.

The new Nawab insisted on keeping Nand Kumar as his Dewan, but the English did not allow him to do so. To make it an object lesson to the Nawab that he was a non-entity, that he had no hand in the management of his own affairs, the English

* See "The Mother of the Campany" by Brajendranath Banerji.—*Bengal : Past and Present*, Oct.-December 1926

removed Nand Kumar from his office at Murshidabad and brought him a prisoner to Calcutta.

It was after the recognition of the new Nawab by the English that Lord Clive landed at Calcutta in May 1765. He had heard of the death of Mir Jafar at Madras, where he had touched on the voyage up to Calcutta. Says Wheeler that Lord Clive

"was delighted at the news. He was anxious to introduce the new system for the government of the Bengal provinces, which he had unfolded to Pitt more than seven years before. He would set up a new Nawab who should be only a cypher. He would leave the administration in the hands of native officials. The English were to be the real masters; they were to take over the revenues, defend the three provinces from invasion and insurrection, make war and conclude peace. But the sovereignty of the English was to be hidden from the public eye. They were to rule only in the name of the Nawab and under the authority of the Moghul Emperor.

"Lord Clive had no misgivings as to his new scheme. He knew that there were two claimants to the Nawab's throne, an illegitimate son of Meer Jaffer aged twenty, and a legitimate grandson aged six. He would place the child of six on the throne at Murshedabad. He would carry out all his arrangements during the minority, without the possibility of any difficulty or opposition."*

So Clive was enraged when he found himself forestalled and showed great indignation when he learnt that his compatriots had extorted twenty lacs of rupees from the new Nawab as the price for setting him on the throne of Murshidabad. He seated himself on a moral chair and condemned the conduct of his Christian countrymen! To a friend, Clive wrote:

"Alas! how is the English name sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation (irrecoverably so, I fear). However I do declare by that great Being who is the searcher of all hearts, and to whom we must be accountable, if there must be an hereafter, that I am come out with a mind superior to all corruption, and that I am determined to destroy those great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt."

But when he taxed his Anglo-Indian countrymen for their corruption, they said that they had imitated his conduct and therefore they should not be blamed for what they had done. Imitation is the most sincere form of flattery. And so Clive should have congratulated himself on having so many apt pupils of his ready to emulate his conduct. But he evidently thought that they had no business to imitate him. "Don't you do as your parson does", is a sentence of a well-known English song. He justified his conduct by affirming that the overthrow of Shiraj-ud-daula, and the elevation of Mir Jafar, had been the work of the people of Bengal themselves, the English taking part in it as mercenary allies and subordinates. But according to him the case was different with regard to the transactions which accompanied the establishment of Najm-ud-daula on his Masnad.

The order of the Court prohibiting their servants taking any presents from the non-Christian nobles and other persons of India was received on the 24th January 1765. Mir Jafar's death took place on the 5th February, 1765. So all the English servants of the Company were fully acquainted with the views and sentiments of their masters.

Early Records of British India, pp. 329-330.

Yet they could not resist the temptation of enriching themselves at the expense of their non-Christian ally and openly defying the orders of their masters. Clive by taking them to task for their misbehavior made them his enemies. He did not succeed in making them disgorge their ill-gotten wealth. They resigned the service, and some of them returning to England set on foot such an agitation against Clive that they succeeded in getting him impeached.

Clive had been sent out to reform the abuses of which the servants of the Company were guilty in carrying on their private trade. The Directors took a statesmanlike view of the situation when in their letter of the 26th of April 1765, referring to the old Imperial firman, they wrote :

"Treaties of commerce are understood to be for the mutual benefit of the contracting parties. Is it then possible to suppose that the Court of Delhi, by conferring the privilege of trading free of customs, could mean an untaxed trade in the commodities of their own country at that period unpractised and unthought of by the English, to the detriment of their revenues and the ruin of their own merchants ? We do not find such a construction was ever heard of till our own servants first invented it, and afterwards supported it by violence. Neither could it be claimed by the subsequent treaties with Meer Jaffier, or Cossim Ali, which were never understood to give one additional privilege of trade beyond what the firman expressed. In short, the specious arguments used by those who pretended to set up a right to it convince us they did not want judgment, but virtue to withstand the temptation of suddenly amassing a great fortune, although acquired by means incompatible with the peace of the country, and their duty to the Company.

"Equally blameable were they who, acknowledging they had no right to it, and sensible of the ill consequences resulting from assuming it, have, nevertheless, carried on this trade, and used the authority of the Company to obtain by a treaty exacted by violence, a sanction for a trade to enrich themselves, without the least regard or advantage to the Company, whose forces they employed to protect them in it.

"Had this short question been put, which their duty ought first to have suggested, 'Is it for the interest of our employers ?' they would not have hesitated one moment about it ; but this criterion seems never once to have occurred."

Clive had used the expression of clearing the "Augean stable ;" for he found corruption prevailing everywhere in the administration of the country. In his letter dated 30th September 1765 he wrote to the Directors of the East India Company :

"Upon my arrival, I am sorry to say, I found your affairs in a condition so nearly desperate, as would have alarmed any set of men, whose sense of honour, and duty to their employers, had not been estranged by the too eager pursuit of their own immediate advantage. The sudden, and, among many, the unwarrantable acquisition of riches, had introduced luxury in every shape, and in its most pernicious excess............Examples of this sort, set by superiors, could not fail of being followed, in a proportionate degree, by inferiors ; the evil was contagious, and spread among the Civil and Military, down to the writer, the ensign, and the free merchant..................

"Before I had discovered these various sources of wealth, I was under great astonishment to find individuals so suddenly enriched, that there was scarce a gentleman in the settlement who had not fixed upon a very short period for his return to England with affluence................At the time of my arrival, I saw nothing that bore the form or appearance of government............

"Your orders for the execution of the Covenants were positive, and expressly mentioned to be the Resolution of a General Court of Proprietors. Your servants at Bengal, however, determined to reject them ; and had not the Select Committee resolved, that the example should be first set

by the Council, or a suspension from your service take place; it is certain they would have remained unexecuted to this hour."

The army showed utter lack of discipline. For wrote Clive :

"Nor were these excesses confined to your Civil servants alone ; the Military Departments also had caught the infection, and riches, the bane of discipline, were daily promoting the ruin of our army . . . . . . How much must the expectations of your army be raised, when they are suffered, without control, to take possession, for themselves, of the whole booty, donation money, and plunder, on the capture of a city ? This, I can assure you, happened at Benares ; and, what is more surprising, the then Governor and Council, so far from laying in a claim to the moiety which ought to have been reserved for the Company, agreeable to those positive orders from the Court of Directors a few years ago, ... gave up the whole to the captors . , ... ,

" Every state (and such now is your Government in India) must be near its period, when the rage of luxury and corruption has seized upon its leaders and inhabitants. . . . . Independency of fortune is always averse to those duties of subordination, which are inseparable from the life of a soldier ; and in this country, if the acquisition be sudden, a relaxation of discipline is more immediately the consequence."

Regarding the refined brutality which the English practised on the Indians, Clive wrote :

" The sources of tyranny and oppression, which have been opened by the European agents acting under the authority of the Company's servants, and the numberless black agents and sub-agents acting also under them, will, I fear, be a lasting reproach to the English name in this country. . . . . . . Ambition, success, and luxury, have, I find, introduced a new system of politics, at the severe expense of English honour, of the Company's faith, and even of common justice and humanity."

It was in reply to this letter of Clive that the Court of Directors wrote to him in May, 1766,

" that we think the vast fortunes acquired in the inland trade have been obtained by a scene of the most tyrannic and oppressive conduct that ever was known in any age or country.

" We have had too much occasion to remark the tyrannic and oppressive conduct of all European agents, who have got away from under the eye of the Presidency, and we wish your Lordship would make it an object of your consideration, how to confine the said Europeans as much as possible to the Presidency, and to those subordinates where the largeness of the investment may require it to be conducted by covenanted servants, preferably to Gomastahs."

Clive hit upon one plan to reform the affairs of the Company and that was to secure all power in the hands of the British authorities at Calcutta and to make use of the Nawab at Murshidabad as a mere puppet. This was known in the euphemistic language of the day as the "Dewany". As far back as 1758 Clive had communicated to Pitt his ideas about the Government of Bengal, and now that he had the opportunity he tried to carry them into effect. In this he was merely following the example set by Dupleix, the Peshwas, the Nizam and the Nawab Vazir of Oudh. The Mughal Emperor of Hindustan was the real sovereign of Bengal, Behar and Orissa. The Nawab was his representative or Viceroy. In theory, he could not grant any privilege to anybody without the sanction and approval

The Emperor Shah Alam

of the Emperor. Clive understood this very well and so he proceeded to the Emperor for procuring for the Company the investiture of the Dewan.

The Emperor was still staying at Allahabad under the protection of the Nawab Vazir of Oudh. * Clive had to go to that place, to have his ambition gratified. Before his return to India, the war that had been waged against Kasim Ali and the Nawab Vazir had been brought to a close. It is asserted by one of the biographers of Clive that the tidings of his arrival induced the Nawab Vazir to sue for peace.

"Clive's name," writes Revd. Mr. Gleig, "among the natives was that of a man irresistible in war. The title which he had received from the Nabob of the Carnatic, in commemoration of his exploits on that side of the peninsula, had followed him to Hindostan; and in Bengal, and indeed as far as the limits of the Mogul Empire extended, Sabat Jung's fame was everywhere spread abroad."

But Clive himself wanted peace and not war. For writing to General Carnac on the 20th of May, 1765, he said:

"We must heartily set about a peace; for the expense has now become so enormous (no less than 10 lacs per mensem, civil and military), that the Company must inevitably be undone if the Mahrattas or any other power should invade Bahar and Bengal, for it will then be impossible to raise money *sufficient to continue the war. This is a very serious consideration* with me, and will, I make no doubt, strike you in the same light."

General Carnac was at that time in Benares. Clive set out to join him there. But as he had some important business to settle at Murshidabad, he took that city on his way. Muhammad Raza Khan, who had displaced Nand Kumar, was all in all at Murshidabad. He was no statesman like his Hindu rival, and so he was easily won over by the scheming and designing Clive. Through his instrumentality the Christian lord succeeded in taking all the power into his own hands, leaving the Nawab only the shadow.

But Clive was not satisfied with what he had done in Murshidabad by reducing the Nawab to a non-entity. He was ambitious of procuring more power for himself and the Company. He proceeded to Benares to join Carnac and also meet Shuja-ud-daula, who was at that time staying there. He had the first meeting with the Nawab Vazir on the 2nd August. At this meeting, a treaty was imposed on the Vazir, by which he had to surrender Allahabad and Corah, and agreed to pay to the Company £600,000 as compensation for expenses incurred in the war.

After ratifying the treaty with the Nawab Vazir Clive pushed on to Allahabad,

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* The Governor Verelst wrote:

"As the necessity of retaining His Majesty (Shah Alam) under our influence, or separating ourselves entirely from him, is a maxim in our system, and as the former seems most probable, we should be careful how we allow strangers to assume the management of his Councils. Our conduct towards him is plain. We must either contrive to guide him at a distance, or so to palliate, that if unsuccessful he may consider us as his protectors, our provinces as the place of his refuge."

According to Verelst there was superior advantage in the King removing to Bengal.

"All things, at present, seem tending to the latter and it is an event most to be wished; but I had rather His Majesty should make the proposition, than that we should give the invitation."

Wheeler's *Early Records*, p. 380.

where, as said before, the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam was at that time staying. He met the Emperor for the first time on the 9th August 1765. That was the occasion when Shah Alam tolled the death-knell of the Mughal Empire by signing the grant of the Dewany of Bengal, Behar and Orissa to the East India Company. * He could not see through the designs of the forger Clive, or it may be that the grant of the Dewany was wrested from him. The latter impression must have been prevalent at that time, for otherwise there was no occasion for the Parliamentary Committee of 1773 to make an enquiry about it. In the Third Report (p. 324) it is stated that Lord Clive was questioned,

"Whether, in his opinion, the grant of the Dewanee was really a grant from a prince, who from his situation at that time might be supposed capable of bestowing such concessions; or whether it was an instrument executed as a piece of form, which his Lordship thought it expedient to take from political motives."

The answer given by Clive was an evasive one. He "referred to the public records of the Company wherein his sentiments on that subject are entered."

There can be little doubt that the grant of the Dewany was extorted from the Emperor. Even Elphinstone, in his history of the rise of the British power in India, is constrained to admit that

"There are few transactions in our Indian history more difficult to explain than this treaty. On the one hand the practical good sense of Clive, not apt to be influenced by theories, or alarmed by imaginary dangers, makes us hesitate to suppose that so great a sacrifice could be made without an adequate motive, while on the other, the state of opinion in India at the time, the course of previous events, and the result of subsequent experience, leaves us without any ground for conjecturing what that motive may have been."

From Elphinstone's explanation it is not difficult to conjecture that the grant was obtained by playing on the fears of the Emperor, that is by fraud and show of force.†

* It has been often asked, why did not the Company assume the executive Government of Bengal after the battle of Plassey?

In his "*View of the English Government in Bengal.*" p. 62, Verelst says that it was impossible at that time for the Company to have taken the management of the Dewanee into its own hands, for that the number of the civil servants was barely adequate to the due performance of the commercial business; they were quite ignorant of the genius of the people, and totally unfit for the work of administration."

In 1756 Holwell, who had been Governor of Calcutta when Shiraj attacked that City, published his well-known "Tracts," in which he wrote to throw off the Subadary mask. He said :

"Let us boldly dare to be soubahs ourselves." "We have nibbled at these provinces for eight years, and notwithstanding an immense acquisition—an immense acquision of territory and revenue—what benefit has resulted from our successes, to the Company? Shall we then go on nibbling and nibbling at the bait, until the trap falls and crushes us?"

Clive had to act on the public opinion which was growing on this subject amongst his countrymen.

† Of course it was to the interest of Clive and the English writers of Indian history to say that the Dewany was granted to the Company by the Moghul Emperor of his own free will and without any hesitation. But such was not the case; for the author of the *Seir*, who had a correct knowledge of the nature of the transaction, distinctly says that the Emperor and the Vazir

"were obliged to grant the request (that is the Dewany), although *reluctantly*." Vol. III, p. 9.

The word *reluctantly* shows that the grant was extorted from the Emperor by fraud and show of force. The author of the *Seir* then proceeds :

"Thus a business of such a magnitude, as left neither pretence nor subterfuge, and which at any other time would have required the sending wise ambassadors and able negotiators, as well as a deal of parley and conference with the Company and the King of England, and much negotiation and contention with the Ministers, was done and finished in less time than would have been taken up for the sale of a jack-ass, or of a beast of burden, or of a head of cattle."

The Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, acquired by the English

That the grant of the Dewany at that juncture was very useful to the affairs of the Company is admitted by Clive, who in his letter to the Court of Directors dated Calcutta, 30th September 1765, wrote :

"The assistance which the great Mogul had received from our arms and treasury, made him readily bestow this grant upon the Company and it is done in the most effectual manner you can desire. The allowance for the support of the Nabob's dignity and power, and the tribute to his Majesty, must be regularly paid ; the remainder belongs to the Company. Revolutions are now no longer to be apprehended ; the means of effecting them will, in future, be wanting to ambitious Mussulmen ; nor will your servants, Civil or Military, be tempted to foment disturbances, from whence can arise no benefit to themselves. Restitution, donation money, &c., will be perfectly abolished, as the revenues from whence they used to issue will be possessed by ourselves."*

Clive in this letter mentioned his reasons for not undertaking the Civil administration of the provinces. He wrote :

"The power of supervising the provinces, though lodged in us, should not, however, in my opinion, be exerted. Three times the present number of Civil servants would be insufficient for that purpose : whereas, if we leave the management to the old officers of the Government, the Company need not be at the expense of one additional servant ; and though we may suffer in the collection, yet we shall always be able to detect and punish any great offenders, and shall have some satisfaction in knowing that the corruption is not among ourselves. By this means also the abuses inevitably springing from the exercise of territorial authority, will be effectually obviated ; there will still be a Nabob, with an allowance suitable to his dignity, and the territorial jurisdiction will still be in the chiefs of the country, acting under him and the Presidency in conjunction, though the revenues will belong to the Company. Besides, were the Company's officers to be the collectors, foreign nations would immediately take umbrage ; and complaints preferred to the British Court might be attended with very embarassing conseqences. Nor can it be supposed, that either the French, Dutch or Danes, will acknowledge the English Company Nabob of Bengal, and pay into the hands of their servants the duties upon trade, or the quit rents of those districts, which they have for many years possessed by virtue of the Royal Phirmaund, or by grants from former Nabobs."

It was not from any consideration of moderation that the East India Company at that time did not undertake the Civil administration of the provinces of Bengal, Behar and Orissa. Sir Edward Colebrooke, in his edition of Elphinstone's History of the "Rise of the British power in India," says that Clive's

"moderation on this important occasion has been a theme of reproach from some writers on Indian history who hold that it was only necessary for him to have stretched forth his hand and grasped the dominion of Hindostan. The pacific views which have prevailed at intervals between periods of war and conquest have, according to such politicians, only served as foils to the energy and successes of their warlike successors. The policy of Clive in maintaining a double Government in Bengal was in this view a sham, and doomed to be reversed in a very few years, and his forbearance in not pressing on after the victories in Behar was weakness."†

Clive himself has furnished reasons for his not pressing on after the victories in Behar—reasons which certainly do not show that there was any forbearance on his part. Writing to the Court of Directors on the 30th September 1765, he said :

" Considering the excesses we have of late years manifested in our conduct, the princes of Indostan will not readily imagine us capable of moderation, nor can we expect they

* Third Report, 1773, p. 394.
† p. 449.

will ever be attached to us by any other motive than fear. Meer Jaffier, Cossim Ally, the Nawab of Arcot (the best Mussalman I ever knew) have afforded instances sufficient of their inclination to throw off the English superiority."

Moderation was then a necessity —this being dictated by policy. Moreover, the British servants of the Company being corrupt and addicted to luxury could not be trusted with the administration of the Company's affairs at a distance from the Presideney. Clive wrote in the letter from which extracts have already been given above:-

" The regulation of the Nabob's ministry, the acquisition of the Dewannee, and the honorable terms on which we have conducted a peace with the Vizier of the Empire have placed the dignity and advantages of the English East India Company on a basis, more firm than our most sanguine wishes could a few months ago have suggested. These however alone will not ensure your stability ; these are but the outworks which guard you from your natural enemies, the natives of the country. All is not safe. Danger still subsists from your fomidable enemies within ; luxury, corruption, avarice, rapacity, these have possession of your principal posts, and are ready to betray your citadel."

With such agents as those whose conduct Clive condemned in no measured terms it was impossible to bring large territories at that time under the jurisdiction of the Company. Moreover, had this been done, it might have precipitated the English into war with other Christian nations. For in the course of the letter referred to above, Clive wrote :

"I have already observed, that our acquisition will give no umbrage to foreign nations, with respect to our territorial jurisdiction, so long as the present appearance of the Nabob's power is preserved ; but I am convinced they will, ere long, entertain jealousies of our commercial superiority. Public complaints have indeed been already made from both French and Dutch factories, that the dread of the English name, added to the encouragement of your servants at the different aurungs, has deterred the weavers from complying with their usual and necessary demands ; and I am persuaded, that sooner or later, national remonstrances will be made on that subject. Perhaps one-half of the trade being reserved to the English Company, and the other divided between the French, Dutch and Danes, in such proportions as may be settled between their respetive commissaries, might adjust these disputes to the mutual satisfaction of all parties. Besides, as every nation which trades to the East Indies constantly brings out silver, for the purchase of merchandize in return, and as our revenues will, for the future, enable us to furnish all our investments, without any remittance from England, it seems necessary that we should, in some degree, encourage the trade of others, in order that this country may be supplied by them with bullion, to replace the quantity we shall annually send to China, or to any other part of the world."

This, then, was one of the principal motives of Clive in not pressing on after the victories of Behar. For this would have necessarily contracted the field of the trade operations of other Christian nations and either would have precipitated a war with them or prevented the influx of bullion of which the East India Company stood in urgent need, as mentioned by Clive in the letter referred to above.

After receiving the patent of the Dewany from the Emperor, Clive left Allahabad for Calcutta.

It is necessary here to refer to the death of the young Nawab of Murshidadad. His death was sudden and took place under very suspicious circumstances. The author of the *Seir* writes :

"It must be mentioned that Lord Clive, after a short stay at Murshidabad, had landed in the garden of Saaducbagh on his way to Ilah-abad, where he had been complimented by Nedjm-ed-dowlah and Mahmed-reza-khan, who had accompanied him so far. On Lord Clive's departure these noble persons were returning to their palaces, when on a sudden Nedjm-ed-dowlah was assaulted by some sharp pains in his bowels, which finding no vent at all, became so excruciating, that the young Nawab on his alighting at his palace, departed this life."*

In a footnote, the translator adds :

"I was passing by the young Prince's gate at that very time.........The general report charges Mahmed-reza-khan strongly."

Muhammad Raza Khan was the friend of the English, and the death of the young Nawab being so sudden and under suspicious circumstances, it was not unreasonable to suspect the English in general, and Clive in particular, of foul play in causing the death of the Moslem ruler of Murshidabad. Indeed, so strong was the suspicion that the Parliamentary Committee of 1773 had to inquire into this matter. The rumour in in Calcutta attributed the death to some foul play on the part of Clive.†

When we rememember that Clive was no friend of the young Nawab, for in his letter to the Court of Directors, dated 30th September 1765, his lordship expressed his sentiments regarding that Muhammadan prince in the following terms :

"Even our young Nabob, who is the issue of a prostitute, who has little abilities, and less education to supply the want of them ; mean, weak, and ignorant, as this man is, he would, if left to himself, and a few of his artful flatterers, pursue the very paths of his predecessors. It is impossible, therefore, to trust him with power, and be safe."

—it is not unreasonable to suspect his lordship of foul play in causing the death of Najm-ud-daula. There was no villainy to which that lord could not stoop to gain his object. By the Nawab's death the East India Company benefited,

"in that they took the opportunity of reducing the allowance that was made for the Military Establishment of the former Nawab, by reducing it from 55 lacks a year to Rupees 41,81,131." §

The witnesses examined before the Parliamentary Committee on this subject were Sykes and General Carnac. Of course they denied any foul play. But it should be remembered that they were particular friends of Clive and were associated with him in administration. What wonder if they also had some hand in that foul deed ? For,

Mr. Verelst mentioned in a private letter, that there was such a rumour [of foul play] in Calcutta, and that it was levelled at *Lord Clive and the gentlemen in administration* by their enemies."**

So the evidence of Sykes and General Carnac is not that of disinterested witnesses, and they were not quite trustworthy.

With the death of this Nawab the semblance of power possessed by the Murshidabad Nawabs dissappears from the annals of Bengal. From henceforth, the history of Bengal is interwoven with the names of Christian Governors of the English race.

* Vol. III, p. 13.
† Third Report (1773), p. 325.
§ Third Report (1773), p. 325.
** *Third Report*, p. 325.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAST DAYS OF CLIVE IN INDIA

Clive came out ostensibly to reform the administration of the East India Company in Bengal and remove the abuses in its affairs there. He talked much, but did very little. Perhaps it was not to his interest to have made any reforms in the administration, or he had no capacity to do so. The fact is that his character did not command respect from anybody, and although he was invested with extraordinary powers, he had no influence in this conntry with his own fellow countrymen. They looked upon him as a moral leper,* a self-seeking man who would not scruple to do anything to further his own interest.† Under such circumstances it was impossible for him to have effected any reforms, although he might have been willing to do so.

The inland trade regarding which the Directors of the East India Company wrote so strongly, because the manner in which it was being carried on inflicted tyranny on the people of the country, was not abolished or its evils removed No, if anything, he made matters worse by giving the monopoly of the salt trade to the servants of the Company. In his letter of the 30th September 1765 to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, Clive wrote:—

> "The regulation now established for the Salt Trade, will, I hope, be entirely to your satisfaction. I at first intended to propose' that the Company and their servants should be jointly and equally concerned in the trade itself; but upon better considerations, I judged that plan to be rather unbecoming the dignity of the Company, and concluded it would be better that they should give the trade entirely to their servants, and fix a duty upon it for themselves, equivalent to half the profits. This duty we have computed at the rate of thirty-five per cent. for the present, but, I imagine, it will be able, next year, to bear an increase."

If there is such an exorbitant duty on salt, an article not of luxury but of prime necessity, so that it presses heavily upon the people of India and also makes them liable to many diseases, it is due to the rapacious policy of Clive, who wanted to benefit his own Christian compatriots at the expense of the heathen inhabitants of India.§ Regarding the monopoly in the trade of betel and tobacco, Clive wrote:

> "The articles of betel and tobacco, being of less consequence, and yielding much less advantage, the duties upon them, of course, must be less."

* See Caraccioli, *Life of Clive*, Vol. I. (pages 447 *et seq.*)

† "Other acquisitions come subsequently to view. Notwithstanding the covenants executed by the servants of the Company, not to receive any presents from the natives, that Governor had accepted five lacks of rupees during his late residence in Bengal from the Nawab Nujum-ud-dowla. It was represented, indeed, as a legacy left to him by Meer Jaffer, though all indications pointed out a present, to which the name of legacy was artfully attached. At any rate, if any sums might be acquired under the name of legacies, the covenants against receiving presents were useless forms." Mill, Vol. III, pp. 304-305, fifth edition.

§ The Court of Directors repeatedly wrote to abolish the monopoly in salt and trade in other articles. But the orders of the Court were deliberately set at defiance by Clive and other servants

It should have been just the opposite way. Betel and tobacco being articles of luxury, rather than of necessity, should have been more highly taxed than salt.

So take Clive in any light you like, he did nothing for which the natives of India can be thankful to him. He not only feathered his own nest at their expense, but also helped his countrymen to do so. His so-called reforms in the Indian Administration were meant to benefit his own compatriots and not to alleviate the miseries inflicted on the Indian people by the unsympathetic Englishmen who were proving themselves by their deeds to be veritable "birds of prey and passage" in this country.*

He left India for good in 1767, We have no concern with his career subsequent to his retirement to England. Of course, he played there an Indian "Nabob," which made him many enemies and eventually led to his impeachment. He appeared before a Parliamentary Committee to explain his conduct regarding the political transactions which led to the establishment of the English rule in India. His suicide was attributed by the superstitious natives of England to the pricking of his guilty conscience—to his committing that forgery in deceiving "Umichand" and thus helping to found the British rule, to his abetting the assassination of Shiraj-ud-daula and Najm-ud-daula, and to his seduction of the wives of his many Christian friends and thus making their homes unhappy.

Clive was a very lucky man and was a favorite son of fortune. But he was unscrupulous, and in his nature gratitude had no existence. This alone can explain the low estimate he had formed of the character of the Indian Musalmans, for whom he had never a good word to say. Thus, to give one instance out of many, in one of his letters to the Court of Directors, he wrote:

"The Moors are bound by no ties of gratitude, and every day's experience convinces us that Mussulmen will remain firm to the engagements no longer than while they are actuated by principles of fear, always ripe for a change whenever there is the smallest prospect of success"†

Of course, he judged the Musalmans from his own standard and that of his own countrymen.

of the Company in India. Even after his return to England, Clive wrote a letter dated Bath, 14th November 1767, to the authorities of the East India Company, a few extracts from which are reproduced below:

"The duty which I owe to the Company will not suffer me to be silent, on a subject wherein their interest seems so deeply concerned.

"I learn, and with surprise, that you intend to lay open the Salt Trade, receiving only a duty of ten rupees upon every hundred maunds, at the Collaries, or places where the salt is made.

"Permit me to repeat to you, that the trade in Salt was always a monopoly;.............The natives never had the advantages you now propose to give them, and will be greatly astonished at so unexpected and extraordinary an indulgence."

* "Upon this, as upon his former departure, the regulations which Clive left behind, calculated for present applause rather than permanent advantage, produced a brilliant appearance of immediate prosperity, but were fraught with the elements of future difficulty and distress. A double Government or an administration carried on in name by the Nabob, in reality by the Company, was the favorite policy of Clive; to whose mind a certain degree of crooked artifice seems to have presented itself pretty congenially in the light of profound and skilful politics." Mill, Vol. III, p. 305.

† Long's *Selections*, p. 151.

ECONOMIC CONDITION OF BENGAL.

Verelst succeeded Clive as Governor of Bengal. During the period of his governorship no political transaction of any importance took place. But his rule was not a long one. He resigned in August 1769 and was succeeded by Cartier, who made room for Warren Hastings in 1772.* From the date of the departure of Clive to the appointment of Warren Hastings to the governorship, no political event of any momentous consequence worth recording occurred in Northern India. The stable condition of affairs enabled the servants of the Company to learn the business of the civil administration which the grant of the Dewany had imposed on them. The author of the *Seir* has described the manner in which the civil administration of the country was carried on. He writes :

"The administration was settled in this manner, that Shytab-ray and Mahmed-reza-qhan, and Djeesaret-qhan, Bahadyr, should order all matters relative to Government and Revenue in the best manner they should devise for the Company's benefit ; but that twice a week everything that they should have settled, should be imparted at full length to the respective Englishmen, their associates, who should sign in those two days whatever should have been latterly transacted ; and that every receipt and expenditure of each district, after having been so signed by the Englishmen of those parts, should be transmitted by each Naib or Deputy to the Company's Registers of Calcutta at the end of each year. The affairs of distributive justice were left to the Daroga or Superintendent of that Department, with power to hear and determine in small matters, equitably and to the best of his judgement ; but affairs of importance were to be decided in the Naib's presence, and in that of the Englishmen, his colleagues, for two days in each week, which days should be different from the usual justice days. In consequence of such an arrangement business went on ; and the English commenced acquiring a knowledge of the usages and customs of the country. For it was a standing rule with them, that whatever remarkable they heard from any man versed in business or even from any other individual, was immediately set in writing in a kind of book composed of a few blank leaves, which most of them carry about, and which they put together afterwards, and bind like a book, for their future use."†

This double system of Government produced the worst results possible. There was anarchy in the country, and life and property were not safe. The English were mainly responsible for bringing about this state of affairs in the country. The trade in important articles of prime necessity was monopolized by them; industries were crushed and jewellery of gold and silver, as well as coined money of every description, were being

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* Mr. A. F. Scholfield, Keeper of the Records of the Govt. of India, in the preface to the Third Volume of *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, writes :—

"From the tangle of plot and counter-plot, of intrigue and suspicion, the personality of the Governor of Fort William in Bengal, to whom most of the letters in this volume are addressed or in whose name they were issued, does not emerge with any great distinctness. He was John Cartier, a man who had received the thanks of the Board for his services when Chief of Dacca, and whose administration was later to win the praises of Burke. In 1769 as Senior Member of Council he succeeded Verelst, the retiring Governor. His chief characteristics seem to have been caution and a capacity for agreeing with his Council. But the times needed greater qualities of leadership than were ever his : his name is hardly remembered now, and in the *Dictionary of National Biography* we shall seek for him in vain."

† Vol. III, p. 25.

taken out of the country by them. Consequently there was scarcity of money in the country. No wonder then that society in Bengal was disorganized. Professor Seligman in his *Economic Interpretation of History* has truly observed:

"We understand, then, by the theory of economic interpretation of history, not that all history is to be explained in economic terms alone, but that the chief considerations in human progress are the social considerations, and that the important factor in social change is the economic factor. Economic interpretation of history means, not that the economic relations exert an exclusive influence, but that they exert a preponderant influence in shaping the progress of society."*

The English tried to place the blame of the scarcity of money in Bengal upon the shoulders of others. Thus the Governor of Bengal in a letter dated 1st January 1764, wrote to the King of Delhi as follows :

"May it please your Majesty, Meer Cossim has carried away with him the money due to the Imperial Court, which was collected in the Treasury, together with all the riches of the country."

But the scarcity was not due so much to the roguery of Mir Kasim, as to the misdeeds of the English. The manner in which the inland trade ruined the merchants of the country has already been referred to before. How the prosperous industries of Bengal fared at the hands of the English factors will be evident from what one Bolts wrote in a well-known work named "Considerations of the Affairs of the East India Company."

Bolts had to leave India about a decade after the battle of Plassey. He was a spirited man and he freely criticised the doings of the English in India, which gave great offence to the Anglo-Indian authorities of the day at Calcutta, who consequently ordered his deportation from India.†

Bolts' testimony is very valuable, because what he wrote was from personal experience.

There was the drain of silver form India, which was producing very serious results. The governor Verelst wrote in a despatch to the Court of Directors :

"Whatever sums had formely been remitted to Delhi were amply reimbursed by the returns made to the immense commerce of Bengal, which might be considered as the central point to which all the riches of India were attracted. Its manufactures found their way to the remotest parts of Hindustan, and specie flowed in by a thousand channels that are at present lost and obstructed. All the European Companies formed their investments with money brought into the country ; the Gulphs (the two gulfs of Mocha and Persia) poured in their treasures into this river : and across the continent, an inland trade was driven to the westward to the extremity of the kingdom of Guzerat.

"How widely different from these are the present circumstances of the Nabob's dominions ! Immense treasures have lately been carried out of the provinces by Meer Cossim, which may possibly be reserved as a fund to excite future troubles. Each of the European Companies, by means of the money taken up in the country, have greatly enlarged their annual investments without adding a rupee to the riches of the province. On the contrary, the increase of exports to Europe, has proved so great a restraint upon the industry of private merchants, that we will venture to affirm the balance from Europe, in favour of Bengal, amounts to a very trifling sum in specie.

* Seligman's *Economic Interpretation of History*, p. 67.

† Long's *Selections*, pp. 481-491.

We know of no foreign trade existing at present which produces a clear balance in money, except that carried on with the ports of Judda, Mocha, and Bassora, from whence not fifteen lakhs in bullion have been returned in the course of four years.

"When the provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa came under your jurisdiction, they were much sunk in opulence, population, and manufactures, from their ancient importance. The almost continual irruptions of the Mahrattas, under the government of Alliverdy khan, and the avarice of the ministers under the supineness of Seraj-u-doulah, the necessities of Meer Jaffier, and the iron hand of the rapacious and bloodthirsty Meer Cossim, struck equally at the property of the rich, and industry of the poor, and while it reduced the one to indigence, compelled the other to seek safety in flight. If to these we add, first, the immense amount in specie and jewels to the value of between three and five crores of rupees secreted or carried off by Cossim after his several defeats had obliged him to relinquish all hopes of a reinstatement : 2ndly, the royal tribute of twenty-six lakhs and the expense of about twenty lakhs for a brigade, both paid annually out of the provinces and consequently out of the sphere of our immediate circulation : 3rdly, the annual amount of our own, and the other nations' investments for which no value is received into the country : 4thly, the large exports of bullion to China and the different presidencies during the last three years ; and lastly, the unavoidable misfortune and capital drain, the immense sums paid into the cash of foreign nations, for the bills on their respective companies ; I say, the aggregate of these several exports must appear inevitably and immediately ruinous to the most flourishing state, much less be deemed tolerable to a declining and exhausted country ! Yet it is in this situation the Court of Directors, and the nation in general, have been induced to expect prodigious remittances in specie, from a country which produces little gold and no silver ; and where any considerable imports of both have, for a series of years, been rendered necessary to the trade of foreign Companies, by the general demands for draughts on Europe."

Wheeler writes that

"during three years the exports of bullion from Bengal exceeded five millions sterling, whilst the imports of bullion were little more than half a million. Meantime the rupee rose to an exchange value of two and six pence."*

Regarding the scarcity of coin felt in Bengal, the author of the *Seir* writes :

"On this occasion it was observed that money had commenced to become scarce in Bengal ; whether this scarcity be owing to the oppressions and exactions committed by the rulers, or to the stinginess of the public expense, or lastly to the vast exportation of coin which is carried every year to the country of England, it being common to see every year five or six Englishmen or even more, who repair to their homes, with large fortunes. Lacs piled upon lacs have therefore been drained from this country ; nor is the cheapness of grain to impose on the imagination. It arises from nothing else, but the scarcity of coin, and the paucity of men and cattle. Nor are these deficiencies anything else, but the natural consequences of the non-existence of that numerous Hindian cavalry which heretofore used to fill up the plains of Bengal and Bahar, and which (reckoning those in the Government service, as well as those in the Zemindary pay, together with the expectants and their servants) could not amount to less than seventy or eighty thousand effective men ; whereas now a horseman is as scarce in Bengal as a Phœnix in the world. The decrease of products in each district, added to the innumerable multitudes swept away by famine and mortality, still go on augmenting the depopulatian of the country ; so that an immense quantity of land remains untilled and fallow, whilst those that are tilled cannot find a vent for their productions. And this is so far true, that were it not for the purchases of saltpetre, opium, raw silk, and white piece-goods which the English make yearly throughout Bengal and Bahar, probably a Rupee or an Eshrefi would have become in most hands as scarce as the Philosopher's Stone ; and it would

* *Early Records of British India, p, 375.*

come to pass that most of the people newly-born would be at a loss to determine what it was which people called heretofore a Rupee and what could be meant formerly by the word Eshrefi."*

Unfortunately at such a juncture a drought also happened, which would not have produced famine but for the misdeeds of the factors of the Company. Along with this drought, an epidemic of smallpox also broke out which spared no age and no sex, thus causing a great mortality. It is on the public records that on the appearance of the drought,

"Some of the agents saw themselves well situated for collecting the rice into stores; they did so. They knew the gentoos would rather die than violate the principles of their religion by eating flesh. The alternative would therefore be between giving what they had, or dying. The inhabitants sunk; they had cultivated the land, and saw the harvest at the disposal of others, planted in doubt—scarcity ensued. Then the monopoly was easier managed—sickness ensued. In some districts the languid living left the bodies of their numerous dead unburied".†

In their despatch, dated London, 18th December, 1771, the Court of Directors wrote to the Governor of Bengal :

"We therefore shall not hesitate to declare,. . . . . . that several of our Council . . . . and many of our servants in the different districts of the country, appointed as supervisors of the collection of our revenues, had in manifest violation of our orders, entered into a combination and unduly exercised the power and influence derived from their stations in order to carry on a monopoly in several articles of salt, betelnut and tobacco; and that they had been so far lost to the principles of justice and humanity, as to include rice and other grain in the same destructive monopoly; by which an artificial scarcity was made of an article so necessary to the very being of the inhabitants."

So then, for Bengal at least, the change of masters was not fortunate for its inhabitants.

* Vol. III, p. 32

† *Short History of the English Transactions in the East Indies*, p. 145.

CHAPTER VII

THE ADMINISTRATION OF WARREN HASTINGS (1772-1785)

Till the appointment of Warren Hastings as Governor-General of India, it was thought, the East India Company would be content with their acquisition of the Dewany of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in the North and the strips of land they possessed on the Eastern and Western coasts of India. But Warren Hastings tried to show that he possessed greater skill as a diplomatist and general and more want of scruples than Clive. So he cast greedy eyes on the wealth and earthly possessions of his neighbours, whom he wanted to fleece for his own benefit and also for that of his masters. The period of aggression commenced with Warren Hastings, in whose regime wars were waged with some of the native powers, and the skill of occidental diplomacy was used against others, which did not raise the British people in the estimation of the people of India.

No period of British Indian history is so well-known as the thirteen years during which Warren Hastings presided over Indian affairs. This is principally due to his impeachment, which brought to light many shady transactions which the British had resorted to in acquiring political supremacy in this country. Edmund Burke, whose unsurpassed oratory has immortalised the impeachment of Warren Hastings, would not perhaps have taken so much pains in the prosecution of that Governor had the latter brought any portion of Indian territory under the jurisdiction of England. Eloquently did that orator ask:

"Has he (Warren Hastings) enlarged the boundary of our Government? No; there are but too strong proofs of his lessening it."*

True it is that not one inch of land was added to the dominions of the East India Company while Warren Hastings was presiding over its affairs in the East. But as it is said that the man who standeth still also serveth, so the apparent want of increase of territory during Hastings' administration was of more importance to the subsequent extension of British supremacy than would otherwise have been the case. His policy consolidated the foundation of that Empire which Clive had laid by means of forgery and fraud. Hastings' career as governor was not certainly that of a lion or a tiger, but of the sly fox trying to achieve his object by cunning and fraud rather than by force. His diplomatic transactions were meant to weaken the country powers, and the East India Company gained strength in proportion as they weakened.

In July 1749 Warren Hastings, who had received an indifferent education in his native country, came to India as a writer in the Company's establishment at Calcutta. Of the vicissitudes of his fortunes as a writer, it is not necessary to say much, except that he devoted his leisure hours to self-culture, to learning the languages of the country he lived in, and also the means to impose on the simple-minded natives of India. After

* Burke's Speeches, Bohn's Library Series, *Vol. I, p. 131.*

serving for fifteen years he left India in December 1764 for England. He returned to India in 1768, being appointed second in Council of the Madras Government. Four years later, when the post of the Governor of Bengal fell vacant, he was selected to fill that important office.

After the acquisition of the Dewany of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, the Muhammadan Nawab was reduced by his foreign Christian friends to the position of a mere puppet. The real power was vested in the hands of the Naibs, who were creatures of the Company of English merchants. One of these Naibs was Muhammad Raza Khan at Murshidabad and the other was Raja Shitab Rai at Patna. The latter had been of the greatest service to the British in the hour of their greatest trouble and peril. It is impossible to overestimate the friendly offices he had rendered to them. But because he had been of the greatest use to the British, it was therefore that he was to be humiliated and disgraced by them.*

To take the management of affairs out of the hands of the Indian deputies, and to do away with the native agency altogether, Warren Hastings signalized the commencement of his rule by arresting Muhammad Raza Khan and Shitab Rai and ordering them to be brought to Calcutta for trial. The author of the *Seir* has described in detail the manner in which these two Indian functionaries were placed in arrest—that of Shitab Rai suggested treachery.

The trial of these two Indian functionaries took place at Calcutta. They were acquitted after more than a year. If we are to believe Nand Kumar, Warren Hastings received several lakhs of rupees from these two deputies and so was instrumental in getting them acquitted. Muhammad Raza Khan was not reinstated in his post at Murshidabad. Shitab Rai was made Rai-raian of Behar, but he died soon afterwards of a broken heart.

The double government which had been set up by Clive after the acquisition of the Dewany, was thus swept away by Hastings, who also took steps to remove the courts of civil and criminal justice from Murshidabad to Calcutta. At the same time, he

* The author of the *Seir* mentions how Shitab Rai "was often in the necessity of bestowing sums of money, on some Englishmen recommended by the rulers of that nation,* * he made use of two methods, equally improper, and iniquitous, * * the first was, that in matters of *Atlac*, (which word signifies the sending one or two constables for compelling payment of sums due to the treasury), he used to send them by whole dozens at a time; * * His second method was no less iniquitous. He used to bring under contribution the possessors of jagirs, altumgas, and other freeholds, by telling them, that such an Englishman wanted to see their charters and vouchers; and when he had once got them in his possession, (and this was always in that Englishman's name) he used to put those vouchers in the hands of one of his own dependants, or heads of office, who without any possible reason or justice, would exact from his incumbent or possessor, a sum of money proportionable to his income. After this he got together all those contributions, which amounted to a large sum, and bestowed them on the Englishman that had been recommended to him. In this manner, he seemed wholly occupied by the thoughts of keeping the individuals of that nation in good humour; but without minding the Divine resentment, in an affair of so much consequence. * * * It was from these very persons, whom he wanted to keep in good humour, that his ruin took its origin at last. * * *" (Vol. III, pp. 65—66 Calcutta Reprint).

reduced the allowance of the Nawab. Thus the shadow of authority which the Nawab possessed was removed, and the Company's authority over the whole of Bengal, Behar and Orissa was exhibited in bold relief.

But the Company was still a vassal of the Great Mughal, for it had yet to pay an annual tribute to the Delhi Emperor. Shah Alam left Allahabad in May, 1771 for Delhi. Warren Hastings, on assuming the Governorship of Bengal, considered the departure of the Emperor from Allahabad to Delhi a very good opportunity to deprive the Mughal of the tribute which had been solemnly promised to him by Clive on behalf of the Company. He went further and wrested the provinces of Allahabad and Corah, which, by the Treaty, belonged to the Emperor, and gave them to the Vazir.

The partisans of Hastings have tried to justify all these high-handed proceedings of his on grounds of expediency. But perhaps all unprejudiced persons will agree with the historian, Mill, in what he wrote regarding the provinces of Corah and Allahabad.

"Generosity, had it any place in such arrangements, pleaded with almost unexampled strength in behalf of the forlorn Emperor, ... Justice, too, ... spoke on the same side : . . . . . . But these considerations were a feeble balance against the calls of want, and the heavy attraction of gold."*

Thus Hastings removed every landmark of native government from the administration of Bengal. Having destroyed every trace of the native government, which was euphemistically called "reforms," Hastings turned his attention to foreign affairs. He entered into a compact with the Nawab Vazir of Oudh to exterminate the Rohillas. For this act he, or rather the Company, was to receive forty lakhs of rupees. Regarding the Rohilla War, it has been truly observed by an English writer :

"There is probably not another instance on record where a civilised power entered into war with the avowed object of destroying a people with whom it had no quarrel."†

The Rohillas were defeated by the troops led by British officers, and so Warren Hastings easily got the money he had bargained for in this villainous transaction. §

The year after the termination of the Rohilla War, Warren Hastings, who had been hitherto the Governor of Bengal only, was made the first Governor-General of

* (Vol. III [5th Edition], p. 397).

† British India and England's responsibilities, by J. Clarke, p. 25.

§ The position taken by Hastings is thus described by Howitt : "There does not seem to have existed in the mind of Hastings one human feeling ; a proposition which would have covered almost any other man with unspeakable horror was received by him as a matter of ordinary business. 'Let us see,' says Hastings, 'we have a heavy bonded debt, at one time 125 lacs of rupees. By this a saving of near one-third of our military expenses would be effected during the period of such service ; the 40 lacs would be an ample supply to our treasury, and the Vizier (the Nabob of Oude) would be freed from a troublesome neighbour.' These are the monster's own words : the bargain was struck, but it was agreed to be kept secret from the Council and the Court of Directors. In one of Hastings' letters still extant, he tells the Nabob, 'should the Rohillas be guilty of a breach of their agreement (a demand of 40 lacs, suddenly made upon them—for in this vile affair everything had a ruffian character—they first demanded their money, and then murdered them)—we will thoroughly exterminate them, and settle Your Excellency in the country*.'"

* Fifth Parliamentary Report, Appendix No. 21.

[J. Clarke's British India and England's Responsibilities, p. 25, foot-note].

India, the presidencies of Madras and Bombay being placed under that of Bengal. He was to be assisted by a Council, composed of four Councillors three of whom were sent out from England. The most important of these Councillors was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Philip Francis. During the course of a century and a half that India has been under the British rule, no individual of that race has ever tried so sincerely to do good to its people as Francis.* No less was to be expected from him who was the reputed author of the "Letters of Junius."

The administration of Hastings appeared to him so rotten that he was obliged to violently assail him. This ultimately ended in a duel between Hastings and Francis in India (Aug. 1780), and the impeachment of the former in England.

At one time, Francis had the majority of the Council on his side and in opposition to Warren Hastings. It was this majority which encouraged men to bring to light the corrupt practices of that governor. The most notable of these men was Nand Kumar. In his prosecution of Muhammad Raza Khan, Hastings made use of Nand Kumar as a tool to serve his vile purpose. In a letter to the Court of Directors, Warren Hastings wrote:

"You directed 'that if the assistance and information of *Nund Coomar* should be serviceable to me in my investigating the conduct of Mahomed Reza Khan, I should yield him such encouragements and reward as his trouble and the extent of his services may deserve.' There is no doubt that Nundkoomar is capable of affording me great services by his information and advice; but it is on his abilities, and on the activity of his ambition and hatred to Mahomed Reza Khan that I depend for investigating the conduct of the latter and, by eradicating his influence, for confirming the authority which you have assumed in the administration of the affairs of this country. The reward which has been assigned him will put it fully in his power to answer those expectations, and will be an encouragement to him to exert all his abilities for the accomplishment of them."

In the above passage, Hastings is fully revealed in his true colours. He encouraged Nand Kumar with expectations of reward, in order that the latter might exert his abilities for bringing about the conviction of Muhammad Raza Khan. And, of course, after having gained his object, Nand Kumar was to be thrown overboard as mercilessly and unscrupulously by Hastings as was "Umichand" by Clive. But the scoundrelism of Hastings was a shade deeper than that of Clive. He utterly lacked all sense of honour either in private or public life. In every transaction his conduct was prompted by greed and selfishness. He made a tool of Nand Kumar to ruin Muhammad Raza Khan. And after having made use of Nand Kumar for his fell purpose, in order to deprive that Hindu of his expected reward, he acquitted Muhammad Raza Khan, of course, after fleecing him of a very large sum of money, euphemistically called present but in truth a bribe. He knew full well when he was employing Nand Kumar that there was no likelihood of his being given the coveted post of that Muhammadan minister, for it had been a foregone conclusion that the object of "eradicating his (Muhammad Raza Khan's) influence," was "confirming the authority which you have assumed in the administration of the affairs of this country." Yet with the consummate hypocrisy and bad faith which he and

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* See *The Modern Review* for April 1915, pp. 504-506, *Sir Philip Francis—a true British friend of India*

others trained in the Anglo-Indian school of diplomacy of the eighteenth century could employ, Hastings fed the mind of Nand Kumar with hopes of his being appointed the Naib of Bengal. With one stone, Hastings killed three birds—deprived Muhammad Raza Khan of the Naibship of Bengal, disappointed Nand Kumar of the expectations he had raised in his breast, and dissolved the double government in Bengal and brought that province under the direct rule of the East India Company. But above all, he enriched himself with several lakhs of rupees. This was exposed by Nand Kumar, who delivered a letter to Francis to be placed before the Board in which he accused the Governor-General of taking bribes, and enclosing a letter from Mani Begam, one of the widows of Mir Jafar, offering a bribe.*

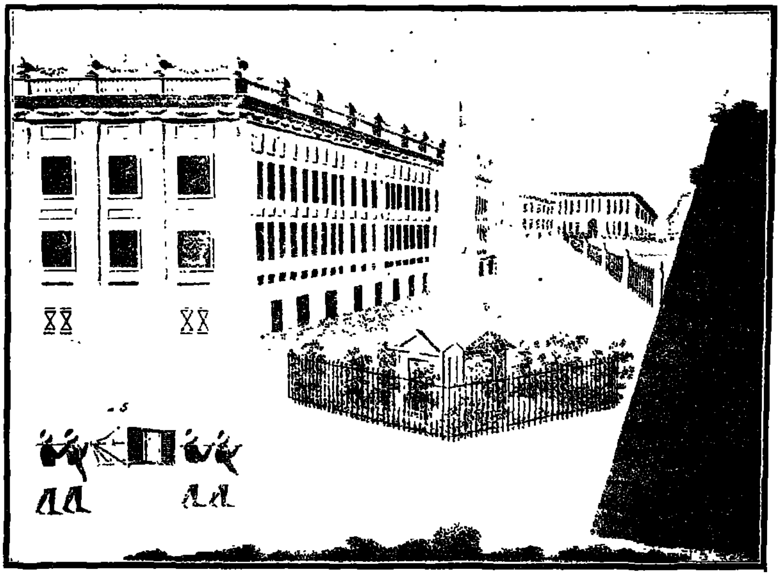
In this letter Nand Kumar mentioned that Muhammad Raza Khan offered ten lakhs to Hastings and two lakhs to him. Soon after, Hastings set Muhammad Raza at liberty and "entirely dropt the inquiry into his embezzlements and malpractices." Francis and other members of the Council who were in opposition to Hastings believed Nand Kumar, and the Governor was ordered to refund the money. Had Hastings been an honest man, he would have faced and not shirked to meet the charge brought against him. His conduct showed that he was guilty of the crime with which he had been charged by the Bengali Brahman. He acted with a high hand and denied the authority of the Council to question the integrity of his character. He charged Nand Kumar with forgery, evidently thinking that such a move on his part was needed to whitewash himself. It was alleged that Nand Kumar had forged a bond in 1770, that is, some five years before.

Hastings laid the matter before the Supreme Court, which was established in Calcutta in 1774. It was presided over by Sir Elijah Impey, a school-fellow of Hastings. Nand Kumar was tried by this judge and was hanged. (5 August, 1775). His execution was carried out in the teeth of public opinion. The alleged crime of forgery (if committed at all) was, as said before, committed in 1770, but the Court of which Impey was the Chief Justice came into existence in 1773. So this Court could not take cognisance of an offence committed years before its birth. Even assuming that the charge of forgery against Nand Kumar was a true one, the penalty inflicted on him was out of all proportion to the nature of the crime. According to the English law forgery was punished by hanging. But Nand Kumar was not an Englishman; and, moreover, he was not a servant of the English Company of merchants, but had been minister of the Mahomedan ruling family of Murshidabad, and so, for his offence, if any, he should have been tried according to the procedure of the Mahomedan law. Mr. P. E. Roberts says:

"There is a further doubt whether the English law making forgery a capital crime ought to have been considered at this time as applicable to India. The question is very technical and abstruse. Impey held that the Act under which Nandakumar was tried, and which was passed in 1729, was extended to India in 1753, and that therefore a forgery committed, as his was, in 1770 fell under it, for which he had the precedent of Govinda Chand Mitra; but Stephen admits that the rule afterwards

* For an account of Mani Begam, see Brajendranath Banerji's paper on "The Mother of the Company" published in *Bengal Past and Present* for 1926, Nos. 64-65.

Raja Chait Singh of Benares



Holwell Memorial, 1790

1. The Monument. 2. The Old Fort. 3. Buildings for Civil Officers.
4. Enclosed Pond in the middle of the town. 5. A Palanquin.

universally accepted by the courts was that the English criminal law as it existed in 1726 was what was in force in India at the time. On that reasoning the Act of 1729 could not have applied.

There is a further question apart from those of the fairness of the trial, the guilt of the prisoner and the question of jurisdiction. There can be no doubt that the infliction of the death penalty was so excessively severe that it amounted to a miscarriage of justice, and for this at any rate the court, and possibly other persons, may justly be condemned. Stephen himself admits that fine and imprisonment would have met the case, and Impey and Hastings have only themselves to blame if their conduct in the matter suggested to the world that they were determined to put Nandakumar out of the way. The Supreme Court by their charter had authority 'to reprieve and suspend the execution of any capital sentence, wherein there shall appear, in their judgment, a proper occasion for mercy.' They could have hardly had a more convincing case for the exercise of this discretionary power. Forgery was universally regarded by Indians as a mere misdemeanour, carrying with it hardly any moral condemnation. Hastings himself had written a few years before, and the words sound almost prophetic, 'there may be a great degree of injustice in making men liable at once to punishments with which they have been unacquainted, and which their customs and manners have not taught them to associate with their idea of offence'."*

The foundation of the political power of the East India Company was based on the forgery committed by Clive. But that "Heaven-born general" was rewarded with a peerage for his villainous deed, while the Bengali Brahman was hanged for the same offence, assuming that he had committed it.

Nand Kumar was a thorn in the side of Hastings, and so the Governor-General was extremely glad to have disposed of him in the above manner.† He could now breathe freely, and for this he was extremely obliged to the notorious Impey. It is not necessary to mention in detail all the wrong-doings of Hastings. British authors have, as a class, come to look with a lenient and even an approving eye on the Indian administration of that pro-consul. Regarding his corruption, Talboys Wheeler writes :

"Lord Macaulay acquits Hastings of money corruption on the ground of want of evidence ; had he been familiar with the workings of native courts in India he would have found Hastings guilty. Hastings acknowledged to having taken a hundred thousand pounds from Asaf-ud-daula in 1782. The inference follows that in 1773 he received a like sum from Shuja-ud-daula and silently pocketed the money. Officers of any political experience would be satisfied that Asaf-ud-daula would never have offered the hundred thousand pounds to Hastings, unless a like sum had been previously offered by his father, Shuja-ud-daula, and accepted by Hastings."§

The following extract from his defence shows what Hastings considered his meritorious deeds for maintaining the political supremacy of the East India Company in India :

"The valour of others acquired, I enlarged and gave shape and consistency to the dominion which you hold there ; I preserved it ; I sent forth its armies with an effectual but economical hand, through

* *The Cambridge History of India*, V. 237-38.

† "It is possible, as Sir Alfred Lyall hints, that Hastings, knowing that Nandakumar was liable to a serious charge and was probably guilty, conveyed to Mohun Prasad the intimation that it was a favourable opportunity to bring forward the case, and 'the fact that Impey tried the man with great patience, forbearance, and exact formality, might prove nothing against an intention to hang him, but only that he was too wise to strain the law superfluously'." (*The Cambridge Hist. of India*, V. 236-37).

§ Short History of India and of the Frontier States of Afghanistan, Nipal and Burma, published in 1880 by Messrs. Macmillian and Co.

unknown and hostile regions, to the support of your other possessions, to the retrieval of one (Bombay) from degradation and dishonour ; and of the other (Madras) from utter loss and subjection. I maintained the wars which were of your formation, or that of others, not of mine. I won one member (the Nizam) of the great Indian confederacy from it by an act of reasonable restitution ; with another (Bhonsla) I maintained a secret intercourse, and converted him into a friend ; a third (Madhoji Sindhia) I drew off by diversion and negotiation, and employed him as the instrument of peace. When you cried for peace, and your cries were heard by those who were the object of it, I resisted this and every other species of counteraction, by rising in my demands, and accomplished a peace, and I hope everlasting, with one great State (the Mahrattas) ; and I at least afforded the efficient means by which a peace, if not so durable, more seasonable at least, was accomplished with another (Tipu Sultan).

"I gave you all, and you have rewarded me with confiscation, disgrace, and a life of impeachment."*

How Hastings' rule was a curse to the people who had the misfortune to be placed uuder it, is thus borne testimony to by Colebrooke, the Orientalist, in a private letter to his father, dated the 28th July, 1788 :

"It was Mr. Hastings who filled the country with collectors and judges who adopted one pursuit—a fortune. These harpies were no sooner let loose upon the country, than they plundered the inhabitants with or without pretences. * * Justice was dealt out to the highest bidders by the judges, and thieves paid a regular revenue to rob with impunity."

Regarding the administration of Hastings, he wrote :

"Nor did his crooked politics and shameless breach of faith affect any but the princes and great men ; the deposition of zemindars, the plundering of begums, the extermination of the Rohillas may be forgotten, but the cruelties acted in Goruckpore will for ever be quoted to the dishonor of the British name."

Then he wrote :

"The system upon which the British dominions have been governed in the East, has affected the happiness of the people. To regulate nations as an article of trade, for the profit which is to be derived, seems a solecism in politics ; not to mention monopolies of salt and opium, or the principles upon which the Company's investment has been provided, I may confine myself to the stretching the land-rents to the utmost sum they can produce. A proprietor of an estate under the Mogul government, seldom paid half of the produce of his estate, and in small properties much less ; he was further allowed to take credit for a certain sum by way of pension, or held rent-free lands in lieu thereof. Under the Company, a landholder is allowed ten per cent. of the net produce as his share."

No wonder Colebrooke was obliged to exclaim :

"The treatment of the people has been such as will make them remember the yoke as the heaviest that ever conquerors put upon the necks of conquered nations."

* For a very fair account of Warren Hastings' administration, the reader is recommended to peruse Chapters VII—XIII of "Empire in Asia—How we came by it—a book of confessions", by W. M. Torrens, M.P., republished by the Panini Office of Allahabad.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RISE OF THE MARATHAS AND THE FIRST MARATHA WAR

It will be necessary here to give a short account of the different native powers with whom Warren Hastings, Cornwallis and Wellesley had to deal. Of these the Marathas, the Oudh dynasty, Hydar Ali and the Nizam were the most important.

THE RISE OF THE MARATHAS

There is no need of entering into antiquarian and philological questions regarding the origin of the Marathas. Whether we regard the Marathas as Aryans or Scythians*, they were, at some remote period of which there is no authentic record, a great nation. Speaking of their early history, Grant Duff writes :

"Maharashtra, from its still retaining a distinct language, from its giving name to a class of Brahmins, and the general appellation of Mahrattas to its inhabitants, was perhaps at some distant period under one raja, or Hindoo prince." (P. 2. *Times of India* Edition, Bombay, 1873).

The Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang, who visited India in the Seventh Century of the Christian Era, formed very favourable impressions of the character of these Highlanders of the Indian Peninsula. He writes of the Marathas :

"The inhabitants are proud-spirited and warlike, grateful for favours and revengeful for wrongs, self-sacrificing towards suppliants in distress and sanguinary to death with any who treated them insultingly."†

The Muhammadan conquest was not without its beneficial influence on the Marathas. Truly has Ranade observed :

"It cannot be easily assumed that in God's providence such vast multitudes as those who inhabit India were placed centuries together under influences and restraints of alien domination, unless such influences and restraints were calculated to do lasting service in the building up of the strength and character of the people in directions in which the Indian races were most deficient. Of one thing we are certain, that after lasting over five hundred years, the Mahomedan Empire gave way, and made room for the re-establishment of the old native races in the Punjab, and throughout Central Hindustan and Southern India, on foundations of a much more solid character than those which yielded so easily before the assaults of the early Muhammadan conquerors. The domination therefore had not the effect of so depressing the people that they were unable to raise their head again in greater solidarity. If the Indian races had not benefited by the contact and example of men with stronger muscles and greater powers, they would have never been able to reassert themselves in the way in which history bears testimony they did." §

The Muhammadan rulers were not such tyrants as the Christian historians have painted them. Muhammadan rule lasted in India for over six hundred years. But not till

* The origin of the term Maratha has been very ably discussed by Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, in his History of the Deccan. Maratha is a corruption of *Mahārāstra* or great nation.

† Watters's *Yuan Chwang*, ii. 239

§ Address delivered at the meeting of the Indian Social Conference, Lucknow, December, 1899.

Aurangzeb's time, was there any desire on the part of the Hindus to get rid of the Muhammadans from India. It should be remembered, that there was not much differenee between Hindus and Muhammadans as far as physical courage or military skill was concerned. Hindus were superior to Muhammadans in numbers and intelligence. The fact of the Hindus submitting to Muhammadan rule for six centuries without a general revolt speaks much in favour of the beneficent character of that rule.

The Muhammadans conquered India, but they did not treat Indians so badly and inhumanly as the Norman conquerors treated the conquered natives of England. High posts in the gift of the Muhammadan rulers were open to the Hindus. The Marathas, in this respect, were better off than the Hindus of the North. The Abyssinian traveller. Ibn-i-Batuta, who visited India in the middle of the fourteenth century, described the Marathas as a people well skilled in the arts, medicine and astrology, whose nobles were Brahmans. The Musalman rulers of the Deccan, being in a state of almost constant warfare with the Mughal Emperors of Delhi, had been forced in self-defence to propitiate their Hindu subjects as much as possible. Muhammadan rule, in fact, helped to build up the Maratha nation.

From the time of Shivaji dates the rise of the Marathas. He founded the most powerful kingdom in India on the ruin of the Mughals. It is usual for Christian historians to call Shivaji a plunderer and his followers free-booters, and Marathas generally as marauders who came into power under quite fortuitous circumstances. But Ranade's words are pregnant with truth when he writes that

> "Free-booters and adventurers never succeed in building up empires, which last for generations and permanently alter the political map of a great continent. Unlike the great *subedars* of Provinces, who became independent after the death of Aurangzeb, the Founder of the Maratha Power and his successors for two generations bore the brunt of the attack of the Mughal Empire at the zenith of its splendour." *

Shivaji, although illiterate, combined in himself the genius of a general, the accomplishments of a statesman and the qualifications of an administrator. He showed great humanity in the conduct of his wars; even the highly boasting Christians have not shown greater tenderness and sympathy to fallen foes than this illiterate Maratha ruler.

He was born in 1627. His father Shahaji was an officer in the service of the king of Bijapur. Shivaji also took service under this Muhammadan ruler. But he did not, or rather could not, remain long in that service. Aurangzeb was, in the prime of his youth, a deputy of his father in the Deccan. It was there that he imbibed that fanaticism which proved fatal to the Empire founded by Babar and reared by Akbar. The Deccan was then the scene of the Mughal conquest, as the indigenous Muhammadan rulers, the descendants of the old Bahmani Kingdom, were being replaced by the Mughals. The Mughal rulers were mild and kind to their Hindu subjects in Northern India, but their deputies could not have been expected to show that spirit of leniency and kindness to their newly conquered subjects in the South. History does not furnish any instance where the conquerors have at

* *Rise of the Maratha Power, p. 5.*

once bestowed all the rights and privileges of free citizenship on the conquered races. Conquest is effected by means of bloodshed and murder, treachery and fraud. The evil qualities of human nature preponderate in the conquerors. In the very nature of things it cannot be otherwise. They have to trample over the rights of man and must be strangers to those qualities which we associate with the names of saints and prophets. Conquerors and their associates must be selfish, for they have to purchase success by selfishness.

There was no need for the Deccan to be placed once more under a new dynasty of Muhammadans. This conquest of the Deccan was one of the principal factors which contributed to hasten the downfall of the Mughal Empire. It is also probable that Aurangzeb's bigotry and fanaticism were due to his Viceroyalty of the Deccan, which was the greatest possible disqualification for his occupying the Imperial Throne of Delhi. Imagine how the people of England would have fared, had Clive and Warren Hastings, by any chance, been crowned as Kings of England, after they had played the tyrant in India. It was the dispensation of Providence that the Mughals did not get the sovereignty of the Deccan. Shivaji is regarded as a divine incarnation by the people of the Maharastra because he was the instrument in checking the Mughal advance. Considering the state of the Deccan on the eve of the birth of Shivaji, his appearance was hailed as that of a prophet. Ranade rightly says that Shivaji

"did not create the Mahratta power ; that power had been already created, though scattered in small centres all over the country. He sought to unite it for a higher purpose by directing it against the common danger. This was his chief merit and his chief service to the country, and in this consists his chief claim upon the grateful remembrance of his people. It was not for nothing that the people looked up to him as their inspired leader."*

The state of the Maharastra was almost exactly the same as that of Italy at the time of the birth of Mazzini. At that time, Italy was a geographical expression ; so was Maharastra. Mazzini tried to coalesce into a homogeneous whole the disunited peoples inhabiting the different provinces of the Italian peninsula. So did Shivaji. But he was greater than Mazzini ; for the Italian patriot was only an enthusiast and idealist. Shivaji was not only that but a soldier also. Mazzini was never crowned king of the Italian nation. Shivaji lived to rule the Maharastra people. Modern Italy has been brought into existence by the conjoint labours of Mazzini, the idealist, Garibaldi, the soldier, Cavour, the statesman and Victor Emmanuel, the King. We shall understand Shivaji better when we realize the fact that he combined in himself the enthusiasm and idealism of Mazzini, the military genius of Garibaldi and the statesmanship of Cavour, while the noble qualities which he displayed as the king of the Marathas have hardly been surpassed by any monarch either before or after him. His faults dwindle into insignificance when compared with those of any great man in any age or country.

Shivaji was not a man of only this world, but he always thought of the next world also. It is true that he was a soldier, a statesman and a king, but above all these, he was intensely religious. The pride of power and pomp and show of this evanescent

* *Ibid.*, p. 38.

world had no charm for him. His eminently spiritual nature soared above all the petty considerations of temporal existence. It is on record

"that on three memorable occasions he was determined to give up all his possessions and retire from worldly life to seek salvation, and on all these occasions it was with great difficulty that his teachers and ministers prevailed on him to entertain more correct notions of his duty in life."*

In this respect Shivaji stands alone; the history of the world does not present another instance of a soldier, or a statesman or a king ever manifesting the religious enthusiasm or zeal which was the moving spring of Shivaji's actions. With Shivaji the great problem of the day was a religious problem, to which all other questions were but secondary.

Shivaji was not a Brahman and was not a man of letters. He had for his spiritual guide or *guru*, the celebrated saint Ram Das. A great deal of Shivaji's career was influenced by the teachings of this holy man. The object of God in producing this matchless pair of the spiritual guide and the disciple was that Hindus should acquire the sovereignty of India and that this desired for end should be brought about through the instrumentality of Maharastra. Ranade writes that

"in token of the work of liberation being carried on, not for personal aggrandisement but for higher purposes of service to God and man, the national standard received, at the suggestion of Ramdas, its favorite orange colour, which was and is the colour of the clothes worn by anchorites and devotees. The old forms of salutation were dispensed with as implying submission to the foreigner, and a new form was substituted, which only recited the name of Ramdas's favorite deity. Under the same influence the names of Shivaji's principal officers were changed from their Muhammadan designations to Sanskrit equivalents and the forms of correspondence also were similarly improved. Shivaji, from a sense of gratitude to his spiritual teacher, made a gift of his kingdom, and Ramdas gave it back to him as a trust to be managed in the public interest. When Shivaji pressed him to accept some *Inam* lands for the service of his favorite deity, Ramdas significantly requested him to assign *Inams* in territories which were still under foreign sway, thus significantly hinting that the work of liberation was not yet completed." †

It was this ascendency of the spiritual nature in Shivaji which accounts for his receiving the inspiration which guided his conduct in hours of troubles and trials. He was much in advance of the time in which he lived. The intensely religious nature of Shivaji prevented him in his career of conquest from perpetrating those atrocities with which the name of most conquerors or warriors is inseparably associated. The task of the conqueror is generally that of a butcher; he is selfishness personified; and, if necessary, he does not scruple to violate the honour of women, to desecrate the places of worship of his conquered foes or to massacre in cold blood innocent women and children as well as helpless old and sick peoples. Shivaji kept his hands clean from the performance of such vile deeds. In all his campaigns Shivaji came out successful. But in his hour of triumph, he never allowed his men to dishonor any woman or desecrate any holy place of worship. He was not a crusader as the Christians were, or a bigoted and unscrupulous man like Aurangzeb, at whose hands he met with much persecution.

* *Ibid.*, p. 48.

† *Ibid.*, p. 82.

His chivalrous respect for the female sex was mainly due to the influence which his mother exercised over him from his childhood. He was brought up by his mother, for he saw very little of his father Shahaji. All great men have owed to their mothers a great deal for their successful careers. Shivaji was no exception to this general rule. The name of his mother Jijabai should evoke feelings of respect from all those who honour her son Shivaji.

Shivaji's glorious career was prematurely cut short in 1680 when he was a little over fifty years of age. But during that period, his success was phenomenal. He carved out a kingdom for himself, and he so consolidated it that it stood the shocks of the invasions of the Muhammadans and Christians and ultimately brought about the downfall of the mighty Mughals. His idea of the united confederacy and organization of the Maratha States, and his mode of organization of the Maratha government enabled the people of Maharastra not only to conquer India from the Muhammadans and fight the Christians on an equal footing but saved them from ruin during the critical periods of their history.

The reader is referred to Ranade's work for further details regarding Shivaji. It is only necessary for us to refer to the organization of the Civil Government of Shivaji and the Maratha *Chouth* and *Sardeshmukhi*, for the sketch in the sequel will not be made intelligible without thoroughly understanding these subjects.

Ranade writes :

"Like the first Napoleon, Shivaji in his time was a great organiser, and a builder of civil institutions, which conduced largely to the success of the movement initiated by him ;...These civil institutions deserve special study because they display an originality and breadth of conception which he could not have derived from the systems of government then prevalent under Muhammadan or Hindu rule."*

Shivaji's Board of Administration consisted of eight members called the *Ashta Pradhan.*

"The *Peshwa* was Prime Minister, next to the King, and was at the head of both the civil and military administration, and sat first on the right hand below the throne. (2) The *Senapati* was in charge of the military administration, and sat first on the left side. (3) *Amatya* and (4) *Sachiv* sat next to the *Peshwa*, while the (5) *Mantri* sat next below the *Sachiv* and was in charge of the King's private affairs. The (6) *Sumant* was Foreign Secretary and sat below the *Senapati* on the left. Next came (7) *Panditrao*, who had charge of the ecclesiastical department, and below him on the left side sat the (8) Chief Justice.†

Ranade pertinently observes that Shivaji's system has its counterpart in the present constitution of the Government of India. The seed of the decline of the Maratha Power was sown when the successors of Shivaji deviated from his system and when these offices became hereditary. The fault could hardly be laid at the door of Shivaji, for had his successors loyally worked out his system,

"many of the dangers, which ultimately destroyed the Mahratta Confederacy, even before it came in conflict with the superior discipline and resources of the British power, might have been avoided."..

* *Ibid.*, p. 115.

† *Ibid.*, p. 126.

"In another respect also, Shivaji was far in advance of his times. He set himself steadily against any assignments of land as *Jahgir* to his successful civil or military commanders. Every one from the *Peshwa* and *Senapati* down to the lowest sepoy or *Karkun* was, under *Shivaji's* arrangements, directed to draw his salary in kind or money from the public treasury and granaries."*

Thus Shivaji's conception of the civil and military administration was perfect and it may be added that no better system, up to this time, had been worked out in any country.

The concession for the collection of the *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* was granted to the Maratha Government by the Delhi Emperor, after the death of Shivaji and of Aurangzeb. But the conception of these was Shivaji's.* Shivaji in his lifetime exacted these demands from some of the Karnatak princes and chiefs. In his lifetime, Aurangzeb was prevailed upon in 1705, in order to bring the war he was then waging in the Deccan to a conclusion, to consent to the payment of 10 per cent of the whole revenue for which the Maratha Commanders were to agree to maintain order in the Deccan. But the war was renewed and Aurangzeb died in 1707. On his death, his successor released Shahu, who established himself at Satara in 1708. It was in his reign that the concession of the *Chauth* or 25 per cent. of the revenues of the Deccan, then under the sway of the Mughals, was granted to the Marathas by the Delhi Emperor on the understanding that the local expenses of the Mughal Government in the Deccan were about one-fourth of the entire collections. Shivaji's idea of demanding the *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* was to protect those who paid these against foreign aggression by maintaining troops for that purpose. According to Ranade, these institutions bear very close resemblance to the Marquess Wellesley's subsidiary alliances. He writes :

"This idea of the subsidiary alliances was, in fact, a reproduction on a more organized scale of the plan followed by the Mahratta leaders a hundred years in advance, when they secured the grant of the *Chouth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the Imperial authorities at Delhi...

"The *Chouth* and *Sardeshmukhi* rights served, in the hands of the Mahratta leaders, the same purpose of giving legitimacy and expansion to their power which in the last century has resulted from the subsidiary alliances and conquests made by the British Government."†

Much nonsensical talk has been indulged in by European writers and historians by their comparing *Chauth* to the levying of black-mail by the robber Highland Chiefs of Scotland. But the Hindu Prince's *Chauth* was no more black-mail than the system of subsidiary alliance instituted by the Marquess Wellesley.

Shivaji died on 4th April 1680. His death was hailed with joy by the Mughals, especially Aurangzeb, and the Christian Portuguese and English, for he was a terror to them all. Aurangzeb, however, had the magnanimity to acknowledge the greatness of Shivaji, whom he had nicknamed the 'mountain-rat.'

His son, Shambhuji, succeeded him. Although he was cruel and vicious, he inherited the military genius of his father. But he made himself odious to the generality of his subjects by his character. When he was taken prisoner by Aurangzeb, no attempt was made to rescue him. Aurangzeb offered to spare his life on condition of his turning a Musalman. But Shambhuji insulted the Emperor by asking the hand of his daughter

* *Ibid.*, p. 120.

† *Ibid.*, p. 220.

in marriage and abusing the Prophet. It was more than what the flesh and blood of the fanatic Aurangzeb could bear. He ordered the execution of Shambhuji, after putting out his eyes and cutting out his tongue. This cruel execution aroused the indignation of the Marathas and made them the deadliest enemies of the Mughals.

His son Shivaji was a boy of six years only when Shambhuji was executed. He, with his mother, was taken prisoner by Aurangzeb's troops. Aurangzeb named him Sahu, an appellation which he always retained. Bernier has described how refractory nobles and dangerous subjects were administered *pousta* by Aurangzeb's orders. *Pousta* was a preparation of opium and it acted as a slow poison on the system.

It is more than probable, that Sahu *alias* Shivaji was made a victim to *pousta* by Aurangzeb. He was a captive in the Mughal camp till the death of Aurangzeb, when he was released. He was a very weak prince and was half a lunatic. His long captivity and the probable administration of *pousta* told on his intellect and he was certainly not a proper person to rule the Empire which the genius of his grandfather had founded. He had imbibed the loose morals of the Mughal Court and kept a large harem.

Under such circumstances, his ministers thought proper for the weal of the State to circumscribe his authority to a narrow tract, *viz.*, Satara, and conferred the powers of government on the Prime Minister, known as the Peshwa. This was the origin of the Peshwa's rule. In Sahu's time, Balaji Viswanath was the Peshwa, and he succeeded in making the Peshwaship an hereditary office. Christian historians and writers have indulged in much nonsensical talk about the Peshwa's confiscating the powers of the Maratha rulers. But it appears to us that the Peshwas prevented the ruin of the Maratha Empire, then in its infancy, by taking over its management from the hands of the incapable and pleasure-hunting and degenerate descendants of the great Shivaji. No one in his senses would ever believe that, had Sahu been permitted to rule without restriction over the Empire of his grandfather, that Empire would have fared better than it did under the Peshwa's administration. The Peshwas should be hailed as saviours rather than as confiscators of the Maratha Empire. From the death of Aurangzeb till the fatal battle of Panipat, which put an end to the sole supremacy of the Peshwas, the Brahmin Peshwas were engaged in consolidating and extending the empire of the Marathas. They extended their rule from Cape Comorin in the South to the confines of the Himalayas in the North, and from the Bay of Bengal in the East to the Arabian Sea in the West. Had the Peshwaship not been made hereditary, it is probable that the Maratha Empire would have had a longer lease of life and would have successfully withstood the intrigues and conspiracies of the Christian merchants who brought on its fall.

In Maratha History there are two central figures round which are to be traced the rise and the decline of the Maratha Empire. The valor and genius of Shivaji laid the foundation of the Empire; the imprudence and intrigue of Raghunath Rao precipitated its fall. The latter was instrumental in bringing the Marathas into conflict with the Afghans, which resulted in the battle of Panipat; and later still with the English, which ended in the break-up of the great Shivaji's Empire.

How Shivaji laid the foundation of the Empire has already been told. The mischief done by Raghunath Rao or Raghoba, as he is called in Maratha History, is to be narrated now.

Raghunath Rao was the second son of the Peshwa Baji Rao and brother of Balaji Baji Rao, the greatest of all the Peshwas. At one time of his career he gave great promise of becoming an able military leader. He carried the victorious Maratha arms to the North-Western Frontier of India. He subdued the Mughals, entered Delhi and, after defeating the Afghan troops kept on the outposts of the Panjab, captured Lahore and marched triumphantly as far north as Attock. It was an imprudent step, which brought on the Marathas the wrath of the Afghan sovereign Ahmad Shah Abdali. The Panjab of the time we are writing of was in the hands of the Afghans. Nadir Shah's invasion had the effect of transferring the Panjab from the dominion of the Delhi Empire to the kingdom of the Ruler of Kabul. When Ahmad Shah heard of the occupation of Lahore by the Marathas, he lost no time in marching his troops to regain his lost possessions. The weak Maratha garrisons in the Panjab had to yield to the Afghan invader. It was at Panipat that the Marathas concentrated to oppose the further progress of the Afghans towards Hindustan. Many a time before, the plain of Panipat had decided the fate of the Ruling Houses of India. Not far from Panipat was the scene of the Civil War between the Kauravas and the Pandavas in which was destroyed the Kshatriya or the Warrior Caste of India and thus the country fell a prey to the invasions of every rising power of the world. The sovereignty of India passed from the hands of the Hindus to those of the Muhammadans at Panipat, for it was here that Prithwi Raj fell fighting against Muhammad of Ghor. Babur laid the foundation of the Mughal dynasty in India by gaining the victory at Panipat over his antagonist, the last representative of the House of Lodi. Again, Akbar regained his lost crown by slaying the usurper at the battle field of Panipat.

The battle fought at Panipat in January 1761, sealed the fate of Maratha supremacy in India. The Marathas were defeated and turned back towards Hindustan and the Deccan. The Dehli Emperor became, for a time at least, secure on his throne and independent of the dictatorship of the Maratha general. The Mughal Viceroy of Oudh threw off his allegiance to the throne of Delhi. But the effect was most marked on the Maratha Empire. The houses of Sindhia, Holkar, Gaekwar and Bhonslè, as independent of the Peshwa, date from the day on which the Marathas suffered a crushing defeat at Panipat.

Raghoba, as has been said, had, by his imprudence, excited the wrath of the Kabul ruler and thus brought on the battle of Panipat. But he was not present at that battle. From his intriguing character, it may be presumed that he did not wish the success of his own party. It is recorded in Maratha History that on his return from the North after he had extended the boundaries of the Maratha Empire by adding the Panjab to it, he fell out with his cousin Sadasheo Rao Bhow, to whom he made over the command of the army. Sadasheo Rao Bhow proceeded to Panipat as Commander-in-Chief of the Maratha forces. This must have been rankling

in the breast of the ever intriguing, and at the same time, ambitious, Raghoba. What wonder if he tried his best by intrigues and conspiracies to get his cousin into disgrace and ruin? It is a significant fact that Holkar held aloof and did not render any assistance to his chief on that fatal day at Panipat.

But Raghoba's intriguing character became fully evident in his dealings with the English. Balaji Baji Rao died a few weeks after the fatal battle of Panipat. He was succeeded in the Peshwaship by his son Madho Rao, then in his teens. Raghoba saw his opportunity. He was the regent during the minority of his nephew. For the first time in Maratha history, during the regency of Raghoba, a treaty was concluded between the Christian merchants constituting the East India Company and the acknowledged head of the Maratha confederacy, the Peshwa.

By this treaty the Sidi of Janjira was placed under the protection of the East India Company. The Sidi was also given back all the territory which the Marathas had taken from him. The treaty* went further, for it assured civility and friendship between the Peshwa and the President of the Bombay Factory.

Raghoba had not the foresight of a statesman. He entered hastily into an alliance with the English which sapped the foundation of the Maratha Empire. By the treaty he showed his hand to the English merchants. He made the Sidi his enemy, for that Abyssinian pirate commenced depredations in the Maratha territories, because he was now under the protection of the British. It may be that the Sidi was instigated to these acts of violence in the Maratha territory by the Christian merchants.†

The immediate object of Raghoba in entering into an alliance with the English was to obtain from Bombay some European soldiers and arms, to resist the threatened invasion of the Nizam, the Subedar of the Deccan. The Christian merchants did not consent to render their assistance from a superfluity of unselfishness or for no end. They agreed to furnish Raghoba with the required troops and guns provided the island of Salsette and the fort of Bassein were ceded to them. The degenerate Raghoba was willing to make even these sacrifices; but as the invasion of Nizam Ali did not come off, there was no necessity for guns and Christian soldiers, and so Salsette and Bassein did not pass into the hands of the East India Company then.

Thus Raghoba for the second time committed an imprudent act whose consequences he could not foresee. The Christian merchants were made acquainted with the weak points in the Maratha Government and the Abyssinian pirate chief was raised to a position which, but for Raghoba's action, he could never have attained. Had Raghoba stopped short here without proceeding any further, perhaps much harm

* Grant Duff calls it an agreement and not a treaty. But to all intents and purposes it served the purpose of a treaty.

† At the time when Raghoba was entering into treaty with the East India Company, "the Court of Directors," writes Grant Duff, "were desirous of seeing the Marathas checked in their progress, and would have beheld combinations of the other native powers against them with abundant satisfaction." (*History of the Mahrattas*).

would not have yet resulted to the Maratha Empire. But his ambition knew no bounds. He indulged in intrigues and conspiracies which weakened the Empire founded by Shivaji.

CAUSES OF THE FIRST MARATHA WAR

It is not necessary to recount the vicissitudes of fortune of Raghoba during the lifetime of his nephew Madho Rao, the Peshwa. When Madho Rao attained majority, he found that his uncle, instead of delegating a share to him in the administration of the country, usurped all power. Dissensions between the two occurred, which, though accommodated several times, ultimately led Madho Rao to place his uncle in confinement. Unfortunately for the Maratha Empire, Madho Rao died on the 18th November 1772 at the early age of 28. Referring to the death of this young Peshwa, Grand Duff writes:

"The root which invigorated the already scathed and wide-extending tree was cut off from the stem and the plains of Panipat were not more fatal to the Mahratta Empire than the early death of this excellent prince. Although the military talents of Madhoo Rao were very considerable, his character as a sovereign is entitled to far higher praise, and to much greater respect than that of any of his predecessors." *

Madho Rao died without issue; and his widow immolated herself with the corpse. Prior to his death, Madho Rao had released his uncle, Raghunath Rao, from confinement and nominated his brother Narain Rao to the Peshwaship, whom on his death-bed he recommended to the care and protection of his uncle. But that uncle now saw his opportunity to gain his ambitious end. He got his nephew Narain Rao assassinated on the 30th August, 1773. This occurrence was reported to the Bombay Government by Mr. Mostyn, whom the Bombay Government had sent to the Court of the Peshwa as its envoy. Grant Duff writes:

"Mr. Mostyn was sent to Poona by the Bombay Government, for the purpose of * * using every endeavour, by fomenting domestic dissensions or otherwise, to prevent the Maharattas from joining Hyder or Nizam Ally." †

The Bombay Government were very anxious about Hydar and Nizam Ali at the time when the young Peshwa was assassinated. The Marathas were at the same time threatening the possessions of the East India Company, for they were establishing themselves on the northern side of the Ganges. They would have invaded Allahabad, Corah, Oudh, and Rohilkhand; but Mill writes that

"In the month of May (1773), the situation of their domestic affairs recalled that people wholly to their own country." §

* *Ibid.*, p. 352.

† Grant Duff's History of the Mahrattas, p. 340. Mill writes that Mostyn was sent in 1772 with instructions from the court of Directors "to negotiate with Madhu Rao the Peishwa for the cession of the island and peninsula of Salsette and Bassein, which added so much to the security and value of Bombay." (Mill., Vol. III, p. 424).

§ Mill's History, Vol. III, p. 394.

Nana Fadnavis

Raghunath Rao

Warren Hastings
From a picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds

It will not be very unsafe to presume that Mostyn incited Raghoba to this dastardly deed in order to carry out the instructions he had received from his Government.* This presumption is strengthened by the fact that the British lent their support to Raghoba, the murderer of his nephew, in those transactions which culminated in the first Maratha War.

James Mill, the father of John Stuart Mill, never visited India and was not acquainted with any of the languages spoken in the continent of India. To these causes are to be attributed the shortcomings of his otherwise admirable History of British India. He had to depend on the records of the India House for writing his history. Those records represent Raghoba almost as a saint and quite incapable of the foul deed associated with his name. Of course, it was the policy of the Bombay Government of those days to make Raghoba appear as an aggrieved party. A compact had been formed between the British merchants of Bombay and Raghoba. Hence it was that they did not believe in the murder of Narain Rao by Raghoba, or in his ambition to usurp the Peshwaship. Depending on those records, Mill wrote:

"The members of the Peshwa family, instead of supplanting, had acted with the greatest harmony in supporting their head. And if Raghonaut Rao had aimed at the supremacy, of which no other token appears than the accusation of his enemies, prudence would have taught him, either to usurp the authority from the beginning, or to leave but little time for his nephew to gather strength." †

Regarding the murder of Narain Rao, Mill depended wholly on Mostyn's Report; but unfortunately he did not know the part which Mostyn had played in all these transactions. It was this envoy's interest to speak in laudatory terms of Raghoba and his nefarious doings. But thanks to the researches of Briggs and Grant Duff, we know now the true character of Raghoba and also the reasons which prompted the British merchants of Bombay to give their support to him.

After the death of Narain Rao, Raghoba proclaimed himself as the Peshwa. Mostyn was sent, as has been said above, to Poona to prevent the Marathas from joining Hydar or Nizam. Now Raghoba, whom he helped to gain the Peshwaship, was a tool in his hands. He made him wage war with the Nizam, and Hydar Ali. It is not

* Grant Duff writes: "Rugonath Rao is said to have acknowledged to Ram Shastree that he had written an order to those men, authorising them to seize Narain Rao, but that he had never given the order to kill him. This admission is generally supposed to have been literally true; for by the original paper, afterwards recovered by Ram Shastree, it was found that the word *dhurawe*, to seize, was altered to *marawe*, to kill. It is universally believed that the alteration was made by the infamous Anundee Bye."

It is not known on whose authority Grant Duff charges Anandi Bai with tampering with the order issued by Raghoba. That woman, however bad she might have been, entertained great affection for her nephew. She was a Brahman lady, and as such she felt great regard not only for human beings but for dumb creatures also. No Brahman lady would herself kill or cause any one to kill any animal; Anandi Bai was no exception to the rule. Our own conviction is that Mostyn had a hand in the matter. A writer in the *Calcutta Review*, Vol. II, No. 4, p. 430 (footnote) says "Ragobah afterwards murdered Narain Rao,.....and was supported by the British Government. A *very evil chapter* in Anglo-Indian history."

† Vol. III, p. 419.

necessary to refer to these wars. Raghoba, if not defeated in any, did not obtain any advantage by prosecuting these wars. His absence was taken advantage of by those ministers who had the welfare of the Maratha Empire at heart. Foremost amongst them was the great Nana Fadnavis.* It did not take him long to discover that Raghoba was merely a tool in the hands of the Bombay Government and that the end of the Maratha Empire would not be far off if Raghoba continued to hold the Peshwaship.

It is necessary to refer to the early career of this remarkable statesman. His real name was Balaji Janardhan Bhanu. He was born and bred as a high-class nobleman. The fatal battle-field of Panipat was his training ground, for that event made such an impression on his mind that he directed all his energies and abilities to the maintenance of the Empire which Shivaji had founded. He had proceeded to Panipat while in his teens, not as a fighter, but as Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief of the Maratha Forces, and with the intention of making pilgrimages to the holy shrines of Northern India. For the latter purpose his mother and wife had accompanied him. But at Panipat, he lost both his mother and his wife. He himself travelled in disguise and on foot from Panipat to Puna. He was so much disgusted with life, for he had lost all those who were nearest and dearest to him, that at one time he seriously thought of turning an ascetic. But he was prevailed upon to give up this programme of asceticism. He served as Secretary to Madho Rao, on whose death he acted in the same capacity in the short-lived reign of the ill-fated Narain Rao. But it was in the reign of Madho Rao II, the last but one of the Peshwas, that he reached the Premiership and displayed those qualities of statesmanship which have exacted admiration even from fastidious British critics. He was opposed to Raghoba, because the latter solicited the armed assistance of the English merchants of Bombay. To quote the words of an English historian :

> "Nana Fadnavis avowed his respect and admiration for the English but shrank from their political embrace ; and whatever dangers might impend, he steadily refused to accept their offers of permanent armed assistance."†

It was, therefore, not to be wondered at that Raghoba and Nana could not keep on friendly terms when their views regarding the administration of the Maratha Empire were so diametrically opposed.

When Raghoba learnt that Nana Fadnavis and other ministers were opposed to him, he fled for safety to Gujarat. In the meanwhile (*i.e.*, on the 18th April, 1774) the widow of the murdered Peshwa Narain Rao had given birth to a son.§ Raghoba from interested motives disputed the authenticity of the birth of this posthumous son of his late nephew, whom he had contrived to assassinate. He was supported in this dispute by the Bombay Government, who were no doubt interested in giving every

* The writer is indebted to the able lecture delivered in Puna and reproduced in the *Kesari* of March 1900, by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, for some of the materials regarding the career of this great Maratha statesman.

† Torrens' *Empire in Asia*, p. 238, (Panini Office Reprint).

§ The fact of the birth of this child was at the time much disputed. The Bombay Government, on the report of Mr. Mostyn, were very incredulous and sceptical, but there is no doubt now about the authenticty of the young Peshwa's birth. See Wilson's footnote to his 5th edition of Mill's *History of India*, Vol. III, p. 422.

assistance they could to this wretched man, not out of any love for him, but for the sake of "fomenting domestic dissensions."

Raghoba applied to the President and Council of Bombay for assistance. They were too willing to render him assistance, but not from a superfluity of unselfishness or for no end. They knew that this hybrid alliance would sever Raghoba from the Maratha Confederacy and would thus weaken and enfeeble the Maratha Empire. Moreover, they had been strongly coveting Salsette and Bassein for some years. In 1761, after the battle of Panipat, when Raghoba as Regent to his minor nephew Madho Rao, the Peshwa, concluded the fatal treaty with the English and asked for their assistance in guns and British soldiers to resist the threatened invasion of Nizam Ali, the English were willing to render that assistance on conditon of Raghoba ceding Salsette and Bassein to them. It has been already stated that as the threatened invasion never came off, so Salsette and Bassein did not then pass into the hands of the Bombay Government. But the Government of Bombay were trying every means to get possession of those two places. Even the Directors of the East India Company, in their letter dated the 18th of March, 1768, wrote to the President and Council of Bombay:

"We recommend to you, in the strongest manner, to use your endeavours, upon every occasion that may offer, to obtain these places, which we should esteem a valuable acquisition. We cannot directly point out the mode of doing it, but rather wish they could be obtained by purchase than war." They again wrote in a letter dated 31st March, 1769 "Salsette and Bassein, with their dependencies and the Mahratta's portion of the Surat provinces, were all that we seek for on that side of India. These are the objects you are to have in view, in all your treaties, negotiations, and military operations,—and that you must be ever watchful to obtain." "In more earnest prosecution of the same design," writes Mr. Mill, "Mr. Mostyn arrived from England, in 1772, with instructions for the Court of Directors, that he should be sent immediately to negotiate with Madhoo Rao the Peshwa, for certain advantages to the settlements on the coast of Malabar, and above all for the cession of the island and peninsula of Salsette and Bassein, which added so much to the security and value of Bombay. *

A passage from Grant Duff's History of the Marathas has already been quoted, in which that author states that Mostyn was sent to Puna for the purpose of "fomenting domestic dissensions" for gaining certain advantages to his masters, the Directors of the East India Company. As long as Madho Rao and his brother Narain Rao wielded the Peshwaship, they were guided in all their foreign affairs by the great Nana Fadnavis. It was, therefore, impossible for Mostyn to be successful in his undertaking.

"The result of this negotiation tended only to show that, pacifically at least, the coveted spots were very unlikely to be obtained."†

Is there any wonder that Mostyn, seeing that he did not succeed in gaining the object for which he had been sent by his masters, tried to "foment domestic dissensions" by abetting, if not directly instigating, the assassination of Narain Rao? It is also very significant that nowhere in his despatches, has Mostyn even hinted that the assassination was carried out by order of Raghoba. He could not have deen ignorant of what the whole population of Puna were saying about the assassination. On the other hand,

* Mill, III, p. 423.

† Mill's *History of India*, Vol. III, p. 424.

he blackened the character of the murdered prince, of whom Grant Duff writes:—"He was affectionate to his relations, kind to his domestics, and all but his enemies loved him."

The assassination of Narain Rao was hailed with joy by Mostyn and the Bombay Government. Narain Rao, as said above, was murdered on the 30th August, 1773. Mostyn communicated the news to the Bombay Government. What the Bombay Government thought of the event, may be better described in the words of Mill. That historian writes:

"The assassination of Narain Rao, and the succession of Ragoba, announcing a weak and distracted government, appeared to the Council to present a favourable opportunity for accomplishing an object which their honourable masters had so much at heart, the possession of Salsette and Bassein. In their select consultations, on the 17th of September, 1773, they agreed to instruct Mr. Mostyn, their resident at Poonah, to improve diligently every circumstance favourable to the accomplishment of that event, and on no account whatever to leave the Mahratta Capital."*

It will thus be seen that every endeavour was made by the Bombay Government to get possession of Salsette and Bassein. It was the interest of that government to regard Raghoba as the rightful Peshwa. Raghoba, as said before, had fled to Gujarat. Now he sought the protection of the English and so proceeded to Surat. Here on the 6th of March, 1775, he entered into a treaty with the Bombay Government, by which he gave up Salsette and Bassein, together with the Maratha's portion of the Surat provinces.

This treaty led to the first Maratha War. The Bombay Government sent troops to assist Raghoba in recovering his Peshwaship. The troops were under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Keating. He was sent with the troops "for the assistance of Raghoba against all his enemies." Raghoba left Surat and proceeded with Colonel Keating's detachment to Cambay, and landed there on the 17th March. The remnant of Raghoba's army had assembled at the village Durmuj, eleven miles north-east from Cambay, and here the detachment under Colonel Keating formed a junction with them on the 19th April. With this large army, Raghoba was made by the Bombay Government to proceed to Puna. But Raghoba was not destined to see Puna again.

On the 5th of May, Raghoba moved towards Puna. But the army which the Puna Government had sent in his pursuit, prevented his ever reaching Puna. The Puna army was under the command of Hari Pant Phadke. This commander of the troops had been employed as a clerk by the unfortunate Madho Rao; but by sheer dint of ability he rose to fill one of the most important posts in the Peshwa's Government. On the 18th May, a battle was fought at a place called Arras, in which the troops of Raghoba and his ally fared badly. Many British officers were killed and wounded. But Hari Pant Phadke had to ultimately retire from the field and thus the hybrid allies thought that they had gained a victory: But that it was not a complete victory is proved not only by the heavy losses suffered by the British but by their inability to pursue Hari Pant Phadke. The retirement of the Maratha Commander is to be

*Vol. III, p. 425.

attributed to the season of the year, for the monsoon was expected within a few days' time, which would have made the rivers of Gujarat quite unfordable, and occasioned great difficulties in getting his supplies. On the 10th June, while Hari Pant Phadke was crossing the Narbada, Colonel Keating tried to harass his rear, but in this he was disappointed. The Maratha General crossed the river without any loss and Colonel Keating was obliged to give up the pursuit on account of the outbreak of the monsoon.

But the retirement of Hari Pant Phadke from Guzerat, necessitated also by the affairs in the Deccan, brought on the defection of one of the principal members of the Maratha Confederacy. From this time forward, the Gaekwar does not figure as one of the Confederates owning the Peshwa as their head. How this was brought about will be understood from what follows below.

The founder of the family was one Damnaji Gaekwar, who for his bravery in the battle of Balapoor, fought in 1720 A. D., was appointed by Raja Shahu, as Second-in-Command, under Khunde Rao Dhabaray, of the Maratha army, with the title of Shamsher Bahadur. On his death, which took place in 1721, he was succeeded in the post by his nephew Pilaji Gaekwar. It was due to his enterprise that a greater portion was wrested from the Mughals and added to the Maratha Empire. He established his headquarters at Baroda. But in 1732 he was assassinated by the emissary of one of his enemies; his eldest son, Damnaji, succeeded him. Ever since then Baroda has remained in the possession of the Gaekwar family. After the fatal battle of Panipat, Damnaji followed the example of the Sindia and the Holkar by throwing up his allegiance to, and becoming independent of, the Raja of Satara. But like the other Maratha Chieftains, he joined the Confederacy under the Peshwa. Damnaji died in 1768 leaving four sons—Sayaji, Govind Rao, Manikji, and Fateh Singh. Damnaji, as was usual in those days when polygamy was prevalent; had married three wives. His eldest son, Sayaji, was by the second wife; Govind Rao was the second son by the first wife; Manikji and Fateh Singh were the youngest and full brothers, by the third wife. After the death of Damnaji, there was a dispute to the succession between the two half-brothers Sayaji and Govind Rao. Each advanced precedents to the superiority of his claim. Sayaji was an idiot, but his youngest half-brother Fateh Singh, urged the claim of Sayaji to the succession. The adherents of these claimants—Sayaji and Govind Rao—were waging war against each other, from the time of Pilaji's death till when Raghoba fled from the Deccan and sought an asylum in the Gaekwar's territory. When Colonel Keating arrived in Gujarat with his detachment for the purpose of assisting Raghunath Rao, he, in defiance of the instructions of his employers, tried to take advantage of the dissensions between the two Gaekwar brothers. He tried to negotiate and conclude a treaty with Fateh Singh, and he actually sent on the 22nd April 1775, an agent, named Lieut. George Lovibond, to the camp of Fateh Singh for the purpose of ratifying the treaty. But the young Gaekwar grossly insulted the agent and did not conclude the treaty.

When the Bombay Government heard of the failure of Colonel Keating in getting the Gaekwar under their thumb, and the manner in which Lieut. Lovibond had been insulted, they determined to send a tried diplomatist to join Colonel Keating's force for

the purpose of transacting the political .affairs. Their choice fell on Mostyn. This diplomatist does not need any introduction now. His doings in the Peshwa's court have already been mentioned. It has been already stated that Mostyn was sent to Puna for the purpose of "fomenting domestic dissensions." The success which attended his mission to the Puna Court, led his employers to expect better results from his presence in Gujarat while the Gaekwar brothers were quarrelling for settling the succession. And the Bombay Government were not disappointed. Mostyn was a past master in the art of duplicity ; for diplomats, says the English proverb, are sent abroad to lie for the nation which employs them.

A long as Hari Pant Phadke was in Gujarat Mostyn did not meet with any success. But when that Maratha General retired to the Deccan, for the affairs at Puna necessitated his presence there, and also as the rains were at hand, Mostyn achieved all for which he had been sent by his employers. By playing on the hopes and fears of the Gaekwars, he succeeded in concluding a treaty with Fateh Singh. By this treaty, the East India Company, not by any conquest but by diplomacy, secured a permanent footing in Gujarat. That Company gained territories yielding several lakhs of Rupees' revenue every year. The Gaekwar was obliged to cede to the Company "the government and revenue of the purgunnahs of Baroach," and also "the purgannahs Chickaly Veriow near Surat, and Coral, near the Narbada river, and about 15 coss distant from Baroach, which together make three purgannahs." Sayaji Rao was recognized as the reigning Gaekwar, but the real power was wielded by Fateh Singh ; for, as said before, Sayaji was an idiot. Henceforth, the Gaekwar's connection was severed from the Mahratta Confederacy, and he entered into that hybrid alliance which was so repugnant to the feelings of the people of Maharastra and which ultimately completed the extinction of the Maratha supremacy in India.

PROSPECTS OF THE FIRST MARATHA WAR

The Government of Bombay had waged the war, concluded treaties with Raghoba and Fateh Singh Gaekwar, without the consent and knowledge of the Supreme Government, that is, the Government of Bengal and Governor-General of India. The Act of the Parliament of England passed in 1773, changed the constitution of the Company. The operation of the new constitution was ordained to commence in India after the 1st of August, 1774. The presidencies of Bombay and Madras were placed under the Governor-General, who was to be assisted in all his deliberations, and political transactions by a Council consisting of five members. This constituted the Supreme Government of India. Warren Hastings was appointed by the new Act as the first Governor-General of India. The members of his new Council consisted of General Clavering, Mr. Monson, Mr. Francis and Mr. Barwell. The first three Councillors were appointed by the ministry in England, and they did not arrive at Calcutta until the 19th October, 1774. One of the Councillors was Mr. (afterward Sir Philip) Francis, whose authorship of the Letters of Junius is now a well-known fact. He was the only man in the days of tyranny and oppression practised on the population of India by Europeans to

protest against the conduct of his coreligionists and compatriots in this country. He could not and would not tolerate the abuses which were rampant in India and hence, Warren Hastings became estranged from him. Francis sympathized with the people of India and tried his best to ameliorate their condition. If Bengal enjoys Permanent Settlement now, it is mainly due to his exertions and advocacy. If the people of India have not been totally annihilated and exterminated, or reduced to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water, it is because Francis contributed in no small measure to the bringing about the trial of Warren Hastings, which served to purify the administration of India. It was not to be expected that he would look, with indifference, on the war which the Bombay Government had waged on the Marathas. He kept himself informed of all that was going on in every part of India with which the British had any transactions. It thus happened that while the Bombay Government affected to know nothing against the character of Raghoba, he knew fully the man whose cause the Britishers of Bombay had been espousing. He was also aware of the fact that the Bombay Government had captured Salsette and taken possession of Bassein, and of the treaty concluded with the infamous Raghoba. As is well-known, he had the majority of the members of the Council on his side; so he made the Governor-General address a letter to the Bombay Government requiring an account of the state of that presidency. This letter was received at Bombay on the 7th December, 1774, but was not attended to till the 31st December, 1774. Even then the reply given was very meagre and did not satisfy the Supreme Council. This letter was answered by the Supreme Council on the 8th March, 1775, in which they expressed their disapprobation of the connexion with Raghoba, and asked the Bombay Government to suspend all negotiations with him. But as this did not seem to have any effect on the minds of the members of the Bombay Government and as they did not suspend negotiations with Raghoba, the Supreme Council were obliged to use strong language. In their letter dated 31st May and received in Bombay, on the 12th August, 1775, Warren Hastings and his colleagues condemned the treaty with Raghoba and denounced the support the Bombay Government had given to that infamous man as "unseasonable, impolitic, unjust and unauthorized." They enjoined on the Bombay Government to cancel the Treaty with Raghoba and withdraw the troops from assisting him, and intimated their intention of opening negotations with the authorities at Puna by an agent of their own. For their purpose, Colonel Upton was selected. He left Calcutta on the 17th July, 1775.

The Bombay Government protested against what they considered to be the interference of the Supreme Council in their sphere of jurisdiction. They stated that the measures had been begun before the controlling administration was formed, which was, of course, not quite correct, for they had intimation of the new constitution long before it came into operation. They defended their conduct by pointing out the advantages secured to their employers and their country by the treaty with Raghunath Rao. They sent Mr. William Tayler to Calcutta to advocate their cause, but he did not meet with any success.

On receipt of the letter dated 31st May, 1775, from the Supreme Council the

Bombay Government directed an immediate cessation of the hostilities and Colonel Keating was ordered to return to Surat.

Colonel Upton was furnished with letters for Sakharam Bapu, who was at that time at the head of the ministerial party at Puna; and also Raghoba, in the event of his success. He was instructed to insist upon the cession of Salsette and Bassein, as indispensable conditions in the agreement which was proposed. In his letter to Sakharam Bapu, Warren Hastings wrote, that the conduct of the Bombay Government was contrary to the Company's order,

"because they have directed all their officers not to make any war, nor enter on any dispute. My employer, the King of England, has directed that all the Company's Governors in India should obtain mine and my Council's permission, as King's Governor and Council of Bengal, either to make war or peace."

The Puna ministers were at the time at Purandhar, where Colonel Upton arrived on 28th December, 1775.

The preliminary condition of ceding Salsette and Bassein to the East India Company, to any treaty with the British, was vehemently resented by the Puna ministers, who insisted upon an immediate renunciation of Salsette. Colonel Upton despairing of compliance with all his demands wrote in his letter to Warren Hastings, dated 7th of February, announcing the breaking off of the negotiations. Warren Hastings prepared for war on the largest scale. He tried to enlist the Bhonsles of Berar, the Sindhia and the Holkar in his cause, and wrote to Hydar and the Nizam to support him or at least remain neutral. Troops from Calcutta and Madras were prepared for embarkation.

Colonel Upton was about to return to Bengal, when the Puna ministers changed their mind. It is nowhere stated what were the reasons which led the astute Nana Fadnavis to agree to almost all the proposals of the Supreme Government of Bengal. But it so happened that a treaty was concluded between the East India Company and the Puna Government by which all the territories which they had been coveting for so many years were granted to them. This treaty is known as the Treaty of Purandhar, because it was signed there on 3rd June 1776. It consisted of 19 articles. It made ample provisions for that wretched man Raghoba and ceded to the East India Company Salsette and the revenue of the City of Baroach, together with territory in its neighbourhood, producing three lakhs of Rupees, "by way of friendship to the English Company."

The treaty between the Bombay Government and Raghoba signed at Surat on the 6th March 1775 was cancelled. When the Bombay Government learnt the terms of the Treaty, they were disappointed and seemed to consider themselves insulted by the Supreme Council assuming authority and cancelling the Treaty they had concluded with Raghoba. They appealed to the Court of Directors of the East India Company. Amongst the Directors, there was no Philip Francis to guide and control their deliberations. Every one of those directors understood well his personal interest but was regardless of India's greatness or happiness. Prompted by selfish motives and led by the prospeet of gaining a large dividend, the Court of Directors sided with the Bombay Government.*

* Mill, III, p. 426, Mill has thoroughly exposed the hypocrisy of the Directors is these transactions.

On the receipt of the above-named despatch from the Court of Directors the members of the Bombay Government were encouraged to treat with contempt the Treaty of Purandhar.*

They were ready to renew the war and vigorously prosecute their former intention. Better counsels, however, prevailed, but the members of the Bombay Government never ceased to persevere in their covert opposition to the wishes and intention of the Supreme Government. They saw their opportunity when Colonel Upton was recalled to Bengal. They were directed by the Supreme Government to send a Resident Envoy to Puna. Their choice fell on Mr. Mostyn—the very same man who had once before been sent to Puna for the purpose of "fomenting domestic dissensions," which resulted in the assassination of the young Peshwa Narain Rao, and the infliction of miseries on the land of the Marathas.

As was natural, Nana Fadnavis and other ministers of Puna strongly objected to Mostyn coming to their Court as the Envoy of the British Government. But the Bombay Government had no other diplomatist in their service so skilled in the art of duplicity as Mostyn. Moreover, that government were brooding over their grievances, for the Supreme Council of Bengal had lowered their prestige in the eyes of the Maratha rulers by annulling the Treaty of Surat and not setting up their protege Raghoba, the murderer, on the throne of Puna. They over-ruled the objection of the Puna ministers, and insisted on sending the ever-to-be-detested Mostyn to Puna. Accordingly that diplomat came to Puna in the middle of March 1777, very likely with secret instructions from the members of the Bombay Government to do everything in his power for the non-fulfilment of the articles of the Purandhar Treaty.

It is not too much to say that the rupture which eventually took place between the Marathas and the English would have been prevented had the Bombay Government complied with the request of the Puna Ministers and not sent the notorious Mr. Mostyn to Puna as their Envoy. No sooner did he arrive in Puna than he opened a campaign of intrigues. He discovered that the French were influencing the deliberations of the Puna ministers ! The sight or even the name of a Frenchman was enough to drive John Bull out of his wits.

He writes.—"The Presidency of Bombay informed the Directors by letter, on the 12th of January, 1774, that the Mahratta Government was in a peculiar crisis, and that such an opportunity now occurred of acquiring Salsette and Bassein, as they had very little intention of letting escape. *The Directors, as if anxious to allow time for the conquest, replied not till the 12th of April 1775, when their answer could not be received at Bombay in much less than two years from the time when the measure was announced as on the verge of execution.* Nearly six months after the place was reduced by their army, and governed by their authority, they sat down to say, 'It is with much concern we learn from your records, that we are not likely to obtain Salsette from the Mahrattas by negotiations. We, however, disapprove your resolution to take possession of the island by force, in case of the death or deposition of Raghoba ; and hereby positively prohibit you from attempting that measure, under any circumstances whatever, without our permission first obtained for that purpose.' " (The italics are ours). But these Directors did not fail to approve of the acquisition when made.

* Grant Duff, p. 395.

Hardly had Mostyn been six months in Puna when he furnished the Bombay Government with an account of Maratha affairs which enabled the Bombay Governor named Hornby to write his minute, dated 10th October, 1777. In this minute Hornby wrote that the Maratha affairs

"were fast verging to a period which must compel the English nation either to take some active or decisive part in them, or relinquish for ever, all hopes of bettering their own situation on the West of India."

And he lamented the control by which the Bombay Presidency had been fettered. Hornby was obliged to write the minute in this tone because Mostyn had discovered that a Frenchman named St. Lubin had arrived in Puna! It is nowhere clearly stated what was the object which this Frenchman aimed at by visiting Puna. It is conjectured that

"St. Lubin endeavoured to obtain the cession of the port of Choule, with the fort of Rewadunda; and in order to induce Nana Fadnavis to enter upon an offensive and defensive alliance, he offered to bring 2,500 Europeans to support the ministry, to raise and discipline 10,000 sepoys, and to furnish abundance of military and marine stores."*

But the same historian says that Nana never believed in the assurance of this French adventurer, for he was jealous of all Christians and never trusted them. Nana is said, according to the authority of Grant Duff, to have declared on St. Lubin's taking leave that, "if the envoy could bring a French corps to his aid, he would grant his nation an establishment in the Mahratta territories." There was no danger from the French intriguing with the Marathas as long as the great Nana Fadnavis had a voice in the Maratha affairs.

Not only did Mostyn discover the French intrigue in Puna, but he succeeded better still in strengthening the hands of the Bombay Government by fomenting dissensions amongst the ministers. He sowed discord between Sakharam Bapu and the great Nana Fadnavis, and also between the latter and his cousin Moroba. With the assistance of Mostyn, Moroba succeeded to replace Nana in the Puna Ministry. Nana was obliged to retire to Purandhar. When matters had reached this stage, Moroba was made by Mostyn to request the Bombay Government to immediately conduct Raghoba to Puna. That government determined to afford their assistance without delay and hence commenced all their preparations. The Bombay Presidency were emboldened to set at defiance the Purandhar Treaty, because on their representations to the Court of Directors, that Court had censured the Supreme Council. Hence the Bombay Government lost no time in infringing the Treaty of Purandhar. They still afforded their protection and countenance to Raghoba, which served as a pretext to the Puna Council for delaying the concessions they had made.

Warren Hastings, when he deputed Colonel Upon to negotiate with the Puna Ministers, was obliged to condemn the proceedings of the Bombay Government at the instance of Francis and other members of the Council who were in opposition to him. He was then in the minority. In his defence, on his impeachment, he admitted that he agreed to the Purandhar Treaty to satisfy the opposition. Otherwise he

Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*, p. 404.

would have approved of the Surat Treaty. But now the circumstances were changed. With his casting vote he placed Francis and his party in the minority and snapped his fingers at the opposition of the author of Junius' Letters and his friends. Warren Hastings thus succeeded in carrying into execution all his proposals. Regarding the Maratha affairs, Warren Hastings trimmed his sail to the breeze. He had no sense of justice or equity in him. So when he found that the Court of Directors wished the annulment of the Purandhar Treaty, he unhesitatingly and without scruples, sat to undo what had been done by his command.

When the Bombay Presidency, on the report of Mostyn, represented (or rather misrepresented) to the Supreme Council of Bengal that St. Lubin had received countenance from the Puna ministers, and described the dissensions among them, and when they declared their intention of assisting Moroba who had agreed to set Raghoba on the *masnad* of Puna as Peshwa, Warren Hastings resolved that a supply of money and a reinforcement of troops should be sent to the Presidency of Bombay. Francis and his solitary friend in the Supreme Council, Mr. Wheler, condemned the resolution of the Bombay Government, as illegal, because not taken with the approbation of the supreme authority ; unjust, because of infringing the treaty ; and impolitic, as incurring the dangers and burdens of war.

Warren Hastings and his unflinching supporter, Barwell, on the other hand, contended that it was not illegal, because such were not the sentiment declared by the Court of Directors ; not unjust, because Sakharam Bapu who on behalf of the minor Peshwa, Madho Narain Rao, and of the Puna ministers, had signed the Treaty at Purandhar, was now alleged to have applied for the interference of the Company and the re-instatement of Raghoba as Peshwa. This statement of Warren Hastings is not true, since Sakharama Bapu did nothing of the sort. But perhaps he was not so much to blame as the Bombay Government and the ever-notorious Mostyn. This Envoy, after having fomented dissensions among the ministers, deliberately misrepresented to the Bombay Government that Sakharam Bapu was desirous of the interference of the Company. Warren Hastings declared the war not to be impolitic, because it anticipated the evil designs of a hostile party, and would give the Company an accession of territorial revenue, and a permanent influence in the Maratha Councils.

Colonel Upton, who knew the Marathas much better than Warren Hastings, and who had concluded the treaty with them at Purandhar, sided with Francis and accused the Bombay Presidency, and answered for the sincerity and pacific designs of the Marathas. But Warren Hastings was bent on crossing swords with the Marathas. He did not pay any heed to the sound advice of Francis or of Upton. He gave orders that a force should march from Kalpi to Bombay, traversing the dominions of the independent princes of Hindustan and the Central Provinces.

But before the army ordered by Warren Hastings set out on its march to Bombay, news reached Calcutta of the changes that had taken place in Puna affairs. Moroba, who had solicited the assistance of the Company, was a prisoner in the Ahmednagar fortress and Nana Fadnavis was at the head of the Puna ministry. Sakharam Bapu, on account of his old age, had retired altogether from the party politics of the day, but was

reconciled to Nana Fadnavis and was guided by his advice. Henceforth. the star of Nana was in the ascendant and he tried to prop up the tottering Maratha Empire from dissolution. He was a born statesman and a genuine patriot. Mr. J. Sullivan, writing to Colonel Briggs in 1850, says :

"Give us Nana Fadnavis and such like. What poor pigmies we are as Indian administrators when compared with natives of that stamp ! ! !"

Nana's merits have been appreciated on all hands. It was with such a man that Warren Hastings had to deal.

When the news of Moroba's imprisonment and Sakharam Bapu's reconciliation to Nana Fadnavis reached Calcutta, and when it was clear that no one in Puna desired the restoration of the murderer Raghoba, Francis and Wheler again urged the stopping of the march of the troops. But Warren Hastings was obstinate. He said that the machinations of the French, which only existed in his imagination, rendered it highly expedient to despatch the troops to Bombay. This Governor-General of India gave out that the troops were sent on account of the French and asked the permission of the Sindhia and the Holkar and the Raja of Berar to permit the troops to pass through their territories. The Holkar and the Sindhia were at that time in Puna and so they could not oppose the march of the troops, and granted the passage. An alliance was made with the Raja of Berar. The circumstanees connected with this alliance will be narrated a little further on.

Mostyn was now very impertinent towards the Puna ministers, because he knew of the approach of a force from Bengal. He asked the new ministry under Nana Fadnavis if they held themselves bound by the Purandhar Treaty. This appeared to the great Nana as if the kettle was calling the pot black. His reply was characteristic of the man. He observed :—"The English should keep that treaty faithfully, when they should do the same."

The Raja of Satara had recently died without leaving issue. The Bhonslays of Berar were descended from a branch of the house of Shivaji. In these circumstances, the Governor-General saw his opportunity of fomenting dissensions among the Marathas. He instigated the Raja of Berar to urge a claim to the succession. By this means, Warren Hastings thought he would succeed in crushing the Puna Ministry and giving the whole of the Maharashtra a King who would be a tool in his hands just as the Nawab Vazir of Oudh was. He would alienate the Bhonslays from the Maratha Confederacy and thus weaken them. Mudajee Bhonslay was at this time the regent of Berar, and with him Warren Hastings opened negotiations. The party of Francis pointed out that this alliance* for raising Mudajee to the throne of Shivaji was inconsistent with the declared object for which the war was being undertaken, namely, the re-instatement of Raghoba in the office of Peshwa. Now the Governor-General threw off the disguise. He said that the re-instatement of Raghoba had never been pursued as an end, but only as a means ; and that his hopes and expectations were placed on Mudajee. It is a great pity that Warren Hastings was not tried on the

* In our opinion, *conspiracy* would have been the more proper term.

charge of provoking the Marathas to the war. Had the charge been proceeded with, it is probable that many important documents regarding the obscure transactions of that Governor-General with the Marathas would have seen the light of day. But the managers of the impeachment of Warren Hastings dropped the charge.

The force which Warren Hastings sent from Bengal to coerce the Puna ministry to accept Raghoba as their Peshwa, consisted of six battalions of Sepoys, one company of native artillery, and a corps of cavalry, and he placed Colonel Leslie in its command. The Governor-General gave out that the force was intended to defeat the French designs on the Western coast of India, and even had the audacity to ask Nana Fadnavis to permit the force to pass through the Deccan, that is through the Peshwa's territory. Nana saw through the design of the crafty Christian. He argued that had such been the real intention of the Governor-General, the force would have been sent by sea to the Western Coast to crush the French and not by land through the territories of unknown and by no means friendly princes. He moreover dismissed the French adventurer St. Lubin from Puna. When he found that his remonstrances were of no avail with the Governor-General or with the Bombay Government, he concluded that they were determined to violate the Treaty of Purandhar and wage war against the Marathas. He perceived the gathering storm and made his preparations accordingly.

About this time intelligence arrived of the war of England with France and so the Bombay Government decided to subvert the Puna Ministry, which they considered were hostile to the English nation. Although the Governor-General informed the Bombay Presidency of the despatch of an embassy to, and his intention of forming an alliance with, Mudaji Bhonslé, and although he warned them not to enter on any engagement hostile to the Government at Puna, yet they precipitately concluded a treaty with Raghoba and advanced to him a loan of a considerable amount and determined to send forward one division of the army immediately to Puna to crush Nana Fadnavis and his party. This resolution of the Bombay Government was formed on the minute of Mr. Carnac, one of the members of the Bombay Council, on the 12th October, 1788. Mr. Hornby, the Governor, approved of it. But Mr. Draper, a member of the Council, expressed his dissent. He urged a delay of at least two months, because Colonel Leslie's strong reinforcement was still at a great distance, and because it was impossible for them to judge what might be the object of the Governor-General and Council in treating with Mudaji Bhonslé. But he was over-ruled. On the 22nd November, a force set out under the leadership of gallant British officers from Bombay with the intention of re-instating Raghoba on the Peshwa's throne at Puna. This force was placed under the command of Colonel Egerton, and a committee consisting of Mr. Carnac, Colonel Egerton and the ever detestable Mr. Mostyn*

* The writer has not come across anywhere a bust or statue of the Envoy, Mr. Mostyn. Nor is he aware of any Englishman having taken the trouble to present to the world, a biography of him. Mr. Mostyn is entitled to the ever-lasting gratitude of the natives of England. Neither Clive nor Warren Hastings did so much for the establishment on a secure footing of the rule of England in India as

were appointed to superintend the expedition.* But, unfortunately for the Committee, the man who was an adept in the practice of "fomenting domestic dissensions" among the Marathas, was taken ill and had to retire to Bombay, where he died on the 1st January, 1779.

Raghoba accompanied the expedition and, in his name, a proclamation was issued declaring the objects of the expedition. As far as Khandala, the English pushed on without meeting with any resistance. But Nana Fadnavis was not sitting idle. We are told that "the working of his Intelligence Department was so perfect that half a dozen or a dozen accounts of every important occurrence in any part of the country reached him from different sources within a reasonable time; so that sitting in his chamber, Nana could easily judge of the corroborative value of the different versions and arrive at a conclusion which was nearer truth than any single one of those accounts." Thus he was fully acquainted with the preparations of the Bombay Government. At that time, both the Sindhia and the Holkar were at Puna. So Nana placed them in command of the Puna troops and sent them forward to oppose the English. The able and tried leaders of the Maratha troops knew their tactics so well as to encourage the British by retreating themselves till they could deal an effective blow by choosing their ground. In this instance, the British met with hardly much resistance from Khandala till they reached Talegaon. Talegaon is about 18 miles from Puna. Here the Bombay Force arrived on the 9th January, 1779. The Maratha troops were arrayed here to oppose the force under the British leaders. At the sight of these sturdy Highlanders of the Deccan, the British officers and the men under them became panic-stricken. Without giving a battle to the enemy, they decided to retreat to Bombay. They had eighteen days' provisions with them, and Puna was only two or at the most three days' march in front of them. So had they not become panic-stricken, the advance on Puna would have been easier than the retreat to Bombay. How panic-stricken the Bombay force was is thus described by a modern historian :

"On 9th January the army reached the village of Talegaon, 20 miles north-west of Poona, to find it destroyed and themselves confronted by a large Maratha army. Colonel Carnac was seized with panic and, instead of boldly pushing on to Poona, most fatally counselled retreat, his panic being augmented by Raghunath Rao, who assured him that until a substantial victory was gained no influential Maratha would join his standard." (*Cambridge History of India*, V. 264).†

this Envoy to Puna who succeeded in breaking the power of the Marathas by "fomenting domestic dissensions." The fact should be remembered that the Marathas were the only formidable rivals, the British had to encounter in India. Hence those Britishers lack in gratitude who have yet done nothing to keep the memory of Mr. Mostyn green, since he materially contributed to hasten the downfall of the Maratha supremacy in India.

* "Accordingly Raghunath Rao and the English climbed the *ghat* and waited there for the whole of the last month but none of the chiefs came over to their side. At last Thomas Mostyn discovered that the Marathas were strongly allied with one another and that no stratagems could disunite them and that Raghunath's cause was lost." Raoji to Nawab of Arcot. See Letter No. 1376. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, V. 290.

† See also the report of Raoji, Nawab of Arcot's Agent at Puna,—Letter No. 1376, *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, vol. V.

The retreat commenced at 11 o'clock on the night of the 11th of January. The heavy guns had been thrown into a large tank and a quantity of stores burnt. But the ever-watchful Puna troops came to know that the Bombay Force was retreating to Bombay. They at once surrounded the Bombay Force and cut off its retreat. The Marathas plundered the baggage and stores of the Bombay Force and had the satisfaction to see the complete humiliation of their opponents. But with that regard for human beings and tender feelings towards the fallen foes which form such a prominent trait in the character of the Hindus, the Marathas did not annihilate the Bombay Force. Had they done it then, their Empire would have earned a fresh lease of life for a few generations more at all events. But as will be shown further on, their kindness towards the British was misplaced.

On January 13th, a negotiation was opened by the Committee of the expedition with the Puna ruling party. The Committee made use of perjury and treachery to purchase their retreat to Bombay. They sent their Secretary, Mr. Farmer, to negotiate with the Puna ruling party. Mr. Farmer had the mortification of conveying to the Committee the humiliating terms which the Puna party imposed on the Bombay Government before they would consent to conclude the Treaty. These terms were that Raghoba should be delivered over to them, and that the Bombay Government should restore to the Marathas the whole of the territories they had acquired since the death of Madho Rao Bullal, together with the revenue possessed by the Company in Baroach and Surat. The Committee replied that they had no power to enter on any treaty without the sanction of the Supreme Government. But the Puna party pertinently asked them,

> "Show us then, the power by which you have taken upon you to break the treaty concluded by Colonel Upton."

To this pertinent question, the Britishers were unable to furnish a reply. They therefore submitted to those terms which were dictated to them by their Maratha conquerors. But in this submission, they displayed that character, which the continental nations of Europe ascribe to the English. The chief member of the Committee, Mr. Carnac, stated that they had submitted to those humiliating terms under a *mental reservation* and that these were of no validity. The Committee were obliged, because they had been dictated to by the Puna party, to send an order countermanding the advance of the Bengal Troops. but no sooner had they returned to Bombay than they cancelled their previous order and advised the Commander of the Bengal troops to expedite their advance. Such was their idea of honesty! They did not feel grateful to those who had saved them from utter annihilation, but contemplated treachery and concerted measures to bring ruin on their benefactors. It is only necessary to add that the Court of Directors were displeased with the members of the Field Committees, because they failed to bring the expedition to a successful termination, and dismissed them from the service. So Mr. Carnac, who suggested the expedition, was dismissed together with the military officers.

Colonel Leslie, who had set out in command of the Bengal troops in May 1778, encountered great difficulties in his march, as the independent princes of Bundelkhand opposed his passage. Francis again proposed the recall of the Bengal troops. But

Warren Hastings again over-ruled it. Colonel Leslie was intriguing with the princes and chiefs of those territories through which he was passing. His progress was very slow, as he said, on account of the monsoon. He was condemned by Warren Hastings for the delay which he had incurred, and the engagements which he had formed; and he was ordered to resign the command to Colonel Goddard, who had been his second-in-command. But he did not survive to receive the intelligence of his disgrace. He died on the 3rd October, 1778.

Colonel Goddard commenced his march through Bundelkhand and Central India. He was opposed by the Hindu princes and chiefs, but he succeeded in gaining over the Nawab of Bhopal. This Nawab had been an adventurer of Afghan birth. It did not matter to him in the least whether he favored the English or their enemies, as long as he could get that which was dearest to his heart, *viz.*, gold.

Warren Hastings' hopes as to forming an alliance with the Regent of Berar, named Mudaji Bhonslé, were disappointed, because that Regent did not care to agree to the Governor-General's proposals. He was, however, so much won over by the honeyed words of that crafty man, that he did not oppose the passage of the Bengal Force. His treachery to the national cause of the Marathas was amply rewarded when, after the Second Maratha War, the Berar dominion was stripped of all fertile tracts and important territories, and when in 1853, the extinction of that Maratha Rajaship of Nagpur was declared by Lord Dalhousie.

Goddard was on his march when the Bombay troops were ignominiously defeated by the Marathas and when they purchased their safe retreat to Bombay by means of perjury and treachery. On the receipt of this intelligence, he marched towards Surat, but on the way, on the 9th February, 1779, a Vakil arrived from the Puna Government, bearing the letter written by the Field Committee on the 16th January in which they countermanded his march to the Deccan and commanded his immediate return to Bengal. The Vakil tried his best to enforce this injunction. But the British military officer made use of a lie and. assured the Vakil that his intentions towards the Marathas were most friendly and that he was proceeding to Bombay by order of the Governor-General. The simple Hindu Vakil of Puna was utterly deceived by these false assurances of the Christian officer. Goddard arrived at Surat on the 26th February, 1779.

When the Governor-General was acquainted with the disaster that had befallen the Bombay Force, and of the Treaty concluded with the Puna party by which the English members of the Field Committee solemnly promised upon their honor and under the seal of the East India Company to restore to the Marathas all the territories that had been taken from them since 1756, he at once empowered Colonel Goddard to enter into a Treaty with the Puna party on such terms as he thought most advantageous to the Company. Goddard was given the temporary rank of Brigadier-General and was not placed under the Bombay Government, but directly under the Governor-General. At first Warren Hastings wrote to him to ask the Puna party to agree to the Treaty of Purundar, with an additional clause that the Puna Government would form no connexion, either political or commercial, with the French. Goddard

was also empowered to renew the war in the event of the Puna Government not agreeing to these proposals.

In the meanwhile, Warren Hastings tried to create dissensions among the Maratha confederates. Gaekwar, as has already been stated, had been detached from the Confederacy, when he entered into an alliance with Colonel Keating. The Berar Raja was humored and kept neutral by the smooth and specious promises and sweet words of the Governor-General. Of the remaining two confederates—Sindhia and Holkar—the former was the stronger and abler. It was necessary therefore to win him over.

It was deemed politically expedient to negotiate with Sindhia. Sindhia was the ablest and the most trusted General of the great Nana Fadnavis. Warren Hastings rightly argued that this great Maratha statesman would be rendered helpless, his right arm, as it were, would be removed, by the defection and desertion of Sindhia. When the Field Committee under the presidentship of Mr. Carnac signed the Treaty, and when the Puna party asked for the surrender of Raghoba and two English hostages as preliminaries to the Treaty, Nana Fadnavis appointed Sindhia as the custodian of Raghoba and the English hostages, when the conquered English made them over to the Puna party. Thus Sindhia appeared to be the more important personage before the English than Holkar.

It is necessary here to refer to the rise of the House of the Sindhia and of the man, who was at its head, at the time of which we are taking note.

The ancestors of the Sindhia family are believed to have been of noble origin. Some of them were military peers under the Mughal Empire. But the wheel of fortune had brought their descendants to occupy menial positions in the household of the Peshwa. It was through Ranoji Sindhia, who by the loyal and faithful manner in which he served his master, the Peshwa, that the family once more rose to eminence and power in the Maratha Empire. The father of Ranoji was merely a *Patel* or village manager. Ranoji was a private trooper in the bodyguard of the Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath. His duty was to take care of the slippers of his master during any interview that the latter might have with the Raja. It is related that on one occasion when the Peshwa had a long interview with the Raja, Ranoji became weary and fell asleep, but even in his sleep he held the slippers in both hands clasped to his breast. The Peshwa was much pleased with his conduct and he raised him to the high office of Governor of a province. This province was the northern half of Malwa.

Malwa or Central India was a part of the Mughal Empire and was governed by a Mughal Viceroy. In the beginning of the eighteenth century it was under the Viceroyalty of the Nizam, 'Asaf Jah, the founder of the existing dynasty of Hydarabad. When in 1721, he went to conquer the Deccan, the Delhi Emperor appointed a Hindu, Raja Girdhar Rai, to the Viceroyalty of Malwa. It was then that the enterprising Peshwa directed his attention to the conquest of this fertile province of India and he succeeded. He parcelled out this province into Northern and Southern divisions. The northern portion, he gave in military *fief* to his faithful slipper-bearer, Ranoji Sindhia, and the southern portion to Malharji Holkar. Such is the origin of the two ruling houses which have played such conspicuous parts in the history of India.

Ranoji, according to the usages of the nobles of bye-gone days and of all ages and creeds, had a host of concubines in addition to his married wives. One of his concubines gave birth to Madhava Rao, commonly known as Mahadji. The exact date and place of his birth is not known, as he was not born in wedlock. The legitimate sons of Ranoji did not long survive his death. The bastard, Madhava Rao, obtained the possession of his father's fief without much difficulty. But his succession was the fatal flaw in the Maratha Confederacy which ultimately brought on its ruin. English writers of Indian history have unduly extolled the merits of Madhava Rao. If they are to be credited, then it would seem that the Maratha nation never produced a more valiant soldier or a greater statesman than Madhava Rao. But their statement would hardly be borne out by the investigation of the facts of the case. The reason for this undue eminence given to Mahadji appears to be that he played into the hands of the English—that he paved the way to the establishment of the English supremacy in India.

Schopenheur has said, "Call an Oriental a bastard and he will be your enemy." In the East, a bastard is despised. He is an outcast and lacks in influence with the respectable members of the community.

Mahadji was never respected by the orthodox portion of the Maratha nation. But it does not appear from the records that the great Nana Fadnavis at first entertained anything but friendly regard for Mahadji. It was only when the latter suffered himself the embrace of the English that Nana protested and warned him of the consequences. In his preference for the foreigners Mahadji did not display any statesmanship of a high order. The fatal battlefield of Panipat spared the life of Mahadji as it did that of Nana Fadnavis. But what a contrast between these two men ! While the one tried his best to retrieve the disaster by uniting the Marathas in a Confederacy and not allowing foreigners to have any voice in the administration of the country, the other played into the hands of the foreigners, and filled with European adventurers all places of trust and responsibility in his dominion. This policy of Mahadji was one of the principal factors which contributed to the downfall of the Marathas.

At the time of which we are treating, the affairs of the house of Holkar were managed by a lady of great intelligence, ability and virtue. Her name was Ahalya Bai—a name that has become a household word throughout the length and breadth of India amongst the Hindus. She was almost the contemporary of the Queen Catherine of Russia. But what a contrast between the virtuous Hindu lady of the East and the profligate Christian woman of the West ! There was, however, one point in common between these two women of the East and the West. Both were able and sincerely strove for the welfare of their respective dominions. Ahalya Bai did not like the interference of the foreigners, and it was perhaps this reason which led the Bombay Government and Warren Hastings to seek the alliance of Sindhia and thus to play off Sindhia against Holkar.

It has been said before that the great Nana Fadnavis entrusted Mahadji with the care of Raghoba and the two English hostages. Nana never thought that Mahadji would betray the trust. Unfortunately for the Marathas, the bastard Chief proved false to the cause of the Confederacy. The English opened secret negotiations with him. He

was privately promised the district of Broach in Gujarat and 41 thousand Rupees for his followers. He connived at the escape of the murderer Raghoba, who repaired to Broach and placed himself under the protection of the English. It is recorded by Mr. Keene that Raghoba brought with him messages of goodwill for the English from Mahadji by way of credentials.

General Goddard reached Surat on the 26th February 1779 and opened negotiations with the Puna Ministry. He was at the same time making preparations for renewing the war and intriguing with Gakwar and Sindhia. The negotiations continued till October. Nana Fadnavis was thoroughly disgusted with the perfidious charater of the Englishmen he had to deal with. At last in October 1779, he sent a message to Goddard that the surrender of Salsette and the person of Raghoba were preliminaries to any treaty which the English might wish to conclude with the Maratha State.

The gallant English General evaded giving an immediate reply, but embarked for Bombay, where he arrived on the 1st November, consulted with the Goverment respecting the plan of operations and urged despatch in preparing and sending off a reinforcement. Then he returned to Surat, told the envoy sent by the great Nana Fadnavis, that he could not accede to the conditions which Nana required of him as preliminaries to a treaty and put his army in a state of readiness to take the offensive. He opened negotiations with Fateh Singh Gaekwar. It has already been stated before that Colonel Keating had concluded a treaty with Fateh Singh ; but this treaty was not given effect to on account of the defeat which the English had suffered near Puna. Fateh Singh hesitated to carry out the conditions which the Treaty imposed on him. So Goddard crossed the Taptee on the 1st January, 1780. Fateh Singh was cowed down, and, without fighting the English, he made an alliance with them.

Goddard raided some of the territories of the Peshwa in Gujarat and not without success. This is not to be wondered at when we remember that of the two generals, Sindhia and Holkar, the former proved a traitor. He now liberated the two English hostages whom the Nana had placed in his charge. Fateh Singh Gaekwar was no longer a member of the Maratha Confederacy. What with the treachery of Sindhia and the defection of Gaekwar as an ally, Holkar was unable to make any impression on the enemy in Gujarat.

The conduct of Mahadji Sindhia requires some notice. He had been sent to Gujarat by Nana to fight the English. But he tried to curry favor with them. He was jealous of the Nana. Without possessing the ability, the statesmanship and the foresight of the great Nana Fadnavis, he thought he could oust the latter from the post of supreme importance which the Nana held in the Maratha Confederacy and himself be the protector and the dictator of the Marathas. To gratify his ambition, he did not scruple to sacrifice the good of the Maratha Empire. Without receiving definite promises from the English he liberated the two English hostages and thought by so doing he would succeed in winning the goodwill of the foreigners. General Goddard was not to be so easily pleased. Mahadji was desirous of a separate treaty with the English. Goddard wanted to know the terms which Sindhia wished to propose. On the 16th March 1780, Sindhia's Vakeel submitted the following terms from his master :

"That formerly, when Raghoba was at Tullygaon, after the return of the English army to Bombay, an agreement had been entered into between him and Scindia, and written engagements mutually exchanged for its performance, when the former consented to relinquish all claims to any share in the administration at Poona, and to retire towards Jhansee, where he should receive an allowance of 12 lakhs of rupees per annum ; that the Sicca should continue in the name of the young Peishwa, Mahdoo Rao Narain, and that Bajee Rao, the son of Raghoba, should be appointed the Peishwa's dewan, but as he was too young to transact the business of the office himself, being only four years of age, the care and management of it should be left entirely to Scindia. He now, therefore, proposed that Raghoba should retire to Jhansee, and that the young Bajee Rao should accompany him to Poona."*

What are we to think of the statesmanship and the character of Mahadji when we find him indulging in those low and base intrigues which weakened the Maratha Empire and finally brought on its downfall ! He contracted alliance with the murderer Raghoba for his own aggrandizement. Had he not contrived and connived at the escape of Raghoba, the English would have been obliged to conclude the Treaty on the terms dictated to them by their Maratha conquerors. But the possession of the person of the murderer Raghoba was a trump card in the hands of the Britishers. James Mill has truly observed that

"With regard to Raghoba it was proposed to feed him with such hopes as should ensure the advantage of his name ; but to engage themselves as short a way as possible for a share in the advantages of the undertaking, to the success of which it was so little in his power to contribute."†

Goddard was not likely to throw away his trump card into the hands of Mahadji. He rejected the latter's proposals. Mahadji had the mortification to find that his cringing servility and treachery did not gain him those advantages which he had calculated upon, when he let Raghoba escape and the two English hostages proceed to join the camp of his country's enemies. Not only that, but Goddard a few days after the rejection of his proposals, attacked the camp of Mahadji and drove him and his men beyond the reach of pursuit.

The English were also extremely grateful to Madhava Rao Sindhia for all the trouble he had taken for them and the humanity he had shown to their hostages ; and it was therefore that they carried fire and sword into the very heart of his dominions. But this was a year afterwards, that is, about the beginning of March 1781. We shall recur to this after we have narrated what took place in the Deccan, from the time when Goddard vanquished Mahadji and did not lend a favorable ear to his proposals, to the time when Nana Fadnavis with his consummate skill succeeded in again defeating the English.

It has been already said that Nana had become thoroughly disgusted with the low political morality of the English. He was a Hindu of the old type and had been nurtured on the traditions of the two renowned epics of Ancient India, namely, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The heroes of those Epics sacrificed everything, their crowns and territories, for the sake of truth. The conduct of the English, their chicanery and perfidy, their utter contempt for justice and fairplay, were something

* (Grant Duff, p. 432).

† *History of British India*, iv. p. 38.

abhorrent to his nature. But when he penetrated into their motives, he at once set to unite the different princes of India and try to show the English their proper place in Indian politics. With this object in view, he invited the Nizam, Hydar Ali, the Nawab of Arcot and other minor lights of the peninsula of India. He even addressed himself to the Emperor of Delhi, through his Vakil at Delhi. A translation of this letter is given below. Nana's letter to Purushotam Mahadev Hingne, his Vakil at Delhi, dated 6th May 1780, contains a clear indication of his line of policy:

"News has been received here that the English at Calcutta are going to open diplomatic negotiations with the Emperor at Delhi and win him over to their side. You should, therefore, clearly explain to the Emperor and Najab Khan as follows :

"The ways of Europeans (the word in the original is topikar, *i. e.*, one who puts on a hat) are unfair and wily. It is their custom at first to ingratiate themselves with the Indian princes, show them the advantages of their alliance and then put the prince himself into prison and seize his kingdom. As instances of this, take the cases of Suja-ud-dowla, Muhammad Ali Khan, the Subha of Arcot and the Chief of Chandavar, &c. You should, therefore, put down the Europeans, which course alone will preserve the dignity of the princes of the country. Otherwise the European foreigners will seize the kingdoms on land and occupy the whole country. This is not good and will be highly prejudicial to all the princes in future. And the Emperor being the Lord of the whole of the Earth, it is but right that he should feel himself bound by honour to attend to this matter. All the Chiefs in the Deccan have combined together. The Nawab, Nizam Ali Khan, Hydar Naik and the Peishwa have entered into a quadruple alliance, resolved to put down the English in all directions, and have prepared their armies, artillery and other armaments to make war against the English in their respective territories.

"In Northern India the Emperor and Najab Khan should combine together all the princes and put down the English. This will enhance the fame and dignity of the Empire."

This step of the great Nana, although it did not fully realize his expectations, obliged the English to sue for peace.

When Goddard had vanquished Madhava Rao and occupied some of the territories of the Peshwas in Gujarat, he was asked by the Bombay Government to quit Gujarat and make the Konkan the scene of his future operations. This he did. He captured Kalyan, besieged and reduced Bassein and swooped down on many other places in the Konkan. But when he marched towards Puna, the heart of the Empire, he fared no better than the officers of the previous expedition had done. He had to beat a hasty retreat without even being in sight of the capital of the Peshwas. He had not proceeded farther than the Bhor Ghat, when he was obliged to commence his retreat. But in this retreat he lost very heavily. His rear was threatened by such Maratha Generals as the Holkar, Hari Pant Phadke and Parshuram Bhow. This second defeat, which happened towards the end of April 1781, greatly disheartened the English. They now sued for peace.

To harass Sindhia, Warren Hastings entered into a treaty with the Rana of Gohud. This Jat prince, whose house is now represented by the Rana of Dholepur, was a feudatory of Sindhia. Gwalior was captured by a British officer named Captain Popham. This officer would not have succeeded in his enterprise, had the Rana of Gohud not thrown off his allegiance to Sindhia. The British Force got a base of operations by entering into an alliance with the Rana of Gohud. Gwalior was

in the possession of Mahadji Sindhia and its strong fortress, built on a hill, was escaladed by Captain Popham and his party and captured before the dawn of 4th August 1780.

The retribution which overtook Mahadji for betraying national interests was not yet complete. He had been vanquished by Goddard, and his impregnable fortress of Gwalior was made over to the Rana of Gohud. His territory was invaded by Colonel Carnac, who reduced Siptee and advanced on Sironji on the 16th February 1781. On the night of the 24th March he surprised Sindhia's camp, attacked and routed his force, killed numbers of his men, took 13 of his guns, 3 elephants, his principal standard, 21 camels and many horses.

The humiliation of the traitor Madhava Rao was now complete. His reputation as a General had suffered, whilst that of the Puna party supported by Holkar was greatly increased. It was fortunate for him that the princes of Rajputana at this time did not co-operate with the English against him. Warren Hastings failed in his endeavours to stir them up against Mahadji. He made overtures for peace.

When Warren Hastings received information that Nana Fadnavis had succeeded in combining Hydar and the Nizam against the English and of Goddards' defeat, he informed the Bombay Government of his intention of making peace with the Marathas. At first, he tried to prevail on Mudaji Bhonslè of Nagpur to mediate for peace. In this, he failed. But that traitor, Madhava Rao, now came forward and offered his services to mediate for peace. This was the only course which would have saved Mahadji from utter ruin. After his defeat by Colonel Carnac, Mahadji, as said above, made overtures for peace. He could not maintain a contest in the heart of his own dominions. So when he intimated his intention for making peace, a separate treaty between him and the British Government was concluded on the 13th October 1781. Warren Hastings entered into a secret understanding with Mahadji and induced him to mediate for peace with the Peshwa.

About the same time, the Madras Government addressed a letter to the Peshwa, dated 11th September 1781, in which they stated their wish for peace, and their desire to conclude a firm and lasting treaty, and assured the Peshwa, upon their honor, and that of the King, the Company and the British nation, that just satisfaction should be given by a sincere and irrevocable treaty.

Negotiations proceeded for some months and at last a treaty was concluded at Salbye, on the 17th May 1782, through the mediation of Mahadji Sindhia.* It

* Mahadji Sindhia was not a far-seeing statesman. Had he been so, he would have befriended Raja Chait Singh of Benares, as he was asked to do so by the great Fadnavis who on the 27th November 1781 wrote to his agent Naro Shivdev, who was then with Sindhia in Malwa :

"Chait Singh was weakened by Amani (Asaf-ud-daula) going over to the British and by the defeat of his own followers and had consequently to run away. He, however, is a man of spirit and deserves to be helped in his distress, in order to humble the British. So please urge upon Mahadji the great need of supporting the cause of Chait Singh without caring for any monetary gain in the affair. This is a splendid opportunity." (Sane's *Kavyetihas Sangraha*, Patren Yadi, No. 204), quoted by Brajendra Nath Banerji in his paper on the Last Days of Rajah Chait Singh, p. 2. f-n.

consisted of 17 articles; the whole of the territory which had been taken possession of by the English by fraud and force since the treaty of Purandar was restored to the Marathas. The territory of Gaekwar, and the whole of Gujarat, were to remain precisely on the same footing as prior to the war of 1775. Raghunath Rao was allowed 25,000 Rupees a month and permitted to choose a place of residence. The treaty which Warren Hastings had concluded with the Rana of Gohud was annulled; Gwalior was restored to Mahadji Sindhia, and the Rana placed at the tender mercy of that Maratha chief. This was how Warren Hastings expressed his gratitude to the Rana, without whose co-operation, the English would not have succeeded in defeating Mahadji and ultimately concluding peace with the Marathas.

With the conclusion of the Treaty at Salbye, ended the First Maratha War. This war did not bring any new territories into the possession of the British. In fact, it showed them their weak points and proved to demonstration that the Marathas were not to be easily vanquished. Nana Fadnavis' statesmanship eclipsed that of Warren Hastings. It was a glorious triumph for the Marathas, and had Nana's advice been followed by the Chieftains of the Maharasthra, the Empire founded by Shivaji the Great, would have been established on a more secure and permanent basis. But unfortunately for the Marathas, Nana's advice was of no avail, and thus all his labours could not prevent the disintegration of the Empire.

CHAPTER IX

THE RISE OF THE OUDH PRINCIPALITY.

Like some brilliant comet which rises on the firmament and illumines the sky for a very short time, but whose appearance is regarded as a harbinger of evils by the superstitious people all over the world, was the origin of the Muhammadan principality of Oudh. It rose and became independent of the paramount Mughal power by means of treachery and its existence was like that of an ominous comet, for it never did any good either to the Indian people or to the Mughal Emperor. On the contrary, it materially contributed to the rise of the British Power in India, not only by means of intrigues but by furnishing assistance both in money and men. For, as truly observed by Sir Henry Lawrence in his article on the Kingdom of Oudh which appeared in the *Calcutta Review* for January 1845 :

"No portion of India has been more discussed in England than Oude. Afghanistan and the Punjab are modern questions, but for half a century, country gentlemen have been possessed of a vague idea of a province of India, nominally independent in its home relations, but periodically used as a wet-nurse to relieve the difficulties of the East India Company's finances."

Again, it was Oudh which supplied men to the Indian Army with whose help the British rose into power in India. In the course of the article to which allusion has been made above, Sir Henry Lawrence wrote :—

"The population (of Oudh) is estimated at three millions, four-fifths of whom, perhaps, are Hindus, and they furnish the best disciplined Infantry in India. Three-fourths of the Bengal Native Infantry come from Oudh, and recruiting parties from Bombay are sometimes seen to the East of the Ganges."

The history, then, of the origin of this principality is of great interest to the historian of the Rise of the Christian Power in the East, for although this principality is not so mixed up with the early struggles of the different Christian nations for political supremacy in India as that of the Nizam of the Deccan, yet, the English were not a little indebted to the princes and people of Oudh for the extension and consolidation of their power.

The founder of this Oudh dynasty of Princes was an adventurer who came to India when the decadence of the Mughal Empire had commenced. He is known in Indian history as Sadat Khan, but his original name was Muhammad Amin. He was a native of Persia but came at an early age to Hindustan to seek his fortune here. He was in his teens when in the year 1705, he arrived at Patna to join his father and elder brother who had preceded him thither. On his arrival, finding his father dead, he with his brother proceeded to Delhi. At first he lent his services to Nawab Sarbuland Khan. But he afterwards quitted him and took his way to Court, where he soon acquired favour. The real rulers of Delhi at this time were the Syed brothers. They were called the king-makers and the Emperor was merely a puppet in their hands. While speaking of the rise of the Nizam, we have elsewhere said that justice has not been done

Nawabs of Oudh

Nawab Sadat Ali Khan

Nawab Asifudullah Bahadur

Vazir Gaziudin Hydar

Nawab Mansoor Ali Khan

to the services rendered to the tottering Mughal Empire by these Syed brothers. They had made many enemies. A cabal was formed for their destruction. Asaph Jah (Nizam-ul-Mulk) was one of the principal plotters. The part he played in this foul conspiracy has been narrated in another chapter.

But Muhammad Amin was no less a conspicuous actor in the tragedy which encompassed the ruin of the Syeds. His intrigues and conspiracies bore their desired result. The Syed brothers were got rid of in the manner mentioned elsewhere.

Now was the opportunity for Muhammad Amin. The Syed brothers were something like an incubus to the Emperor whom he had materially assisted in liberating from their thraldom. The grateful-Emperor did not forget his services. He rewarded him with the viceroyalty of Oudh and ennobled him with the title of Sadat Khan.

Sadat Khan was not only a good soldier but possessed the talents of an able administrator. He found the province of Oudh in great disorder but soon reduced the refractory spirits and greatly increased the revenue. Within his own viceroyalty, he established order and protected the husbandmen.

So far the acts of Sadat Khan elicit nothing but praise and admiration from every historian. He showed great administrative talents and rare abilities in bringing into order and introducing reforms in a province where life and property were not secure for want of proper government. But the moral turpitude of Sadat Khan comes into bold relief when one takes into consideration the means he adopted in not only aggrandising his power, but to make himself quite independent of the Delhi Emperor.

Nizam-ul-Mulk was the first traitor in the camp of the Mughals who set the example to others of making himself independent of the Delhi Emperor. It has been pointed out elsewhere how that treacherous chief intrigued with the Marathas and others and helped in no small measure in dismembering the Mugal Empire. But Sadat Khan, the Viceroy of Oudh, did not come either to the rescue of the Emperor or the Empire. Sir Henry Lawrence writes of Sadat Khan :

> "He overthrew many lordlings, and established in their stead one stronger, and therefore better rule. No qualms of conscience in his way. The aggrandisement of his own family was his one object, in furtherance of which he was regardless alike of gratitude, loyalty or patriotism. So long as his own territory escaped, he cared not Persian or Mahratta should ravage the empire, and humble the monarch, in whose weakness he found his own strength."

No one doubts his abilities and talents as a soldier and administrator ; but had Sadat Khan been a statesman gifted with far sight and forethought, he would have, and could have taken steps to avert the downfall of the Mughal Empire. Whether he conspired with Nizam-u-Mulk and invited Nadir Shah's invasion is a question which, however interesting, no historian is competent to decide. The evidence on this subject is too inconclusive to enable any one to arrive at a decision. However, Sir Henry Lawrence writes:

> "Modern historians question the fact of Saadat Khan having, in concert with Nizam-ul-Mulk, invited Nadir Shah's invasion. We have not room to detail the evidence on which our opinion rests, but a careful comparison of authorities leads us to believe that he was guilty of this treacherous deed."

It is much to be regretted that Sir Henry Lawrence did not adduce all his evidence in support of his opinion as to the treachery of Sadat Khan regarding Nadir's invasion. But from the fact that the author of *Seir-ul-Mutakhareen* does not impute treachery to Sadat Khan, and also when it is remembered that there was rivalry between Nizam-ul-Mulk and Sadat Khan, it is difficult to believe that these two traitors, could have *in concert* invited Nadir's invasion. However, it is not impossible or improbable that Sadat Khan, *independently* of Nizam-ul-Mulk, invited Nadir's invasion. But against this may be urged the fact that when Nadir Shah actually invaded Hindustan, Sadat Khan went out to fight him and did not remain idle at home and make excuses and pretexts for not opposing Nadir Shah's march like the Nizam.

After Nadir Shah had triumphed over the Mughal Emperor's troops, both Sadat Khan and Nizam-ul-Mulk tried to curry favour with the conqueror and vied with each other in winning his graces and being in his good books. It was in this manner that these traitors helped Nadir in perpetrating those atrocities which disgrace humanity. Sir Henry Lawrence writes :

"The atrocities committed by Nadir are familiar matters of history. The traitor chiefs did not escape, and Nizam-ul-Mulk and Saadat Khan were especially vexed with requisitions. They were not only themselves plundered, but were made the instruments of extorting treasure from the distant provinces. Nizam-ul-Mulk, jealous of the power and ability of Saadat, took advantage of the persecutions of Nadir Shah to execute a plan for getting rid of his rival. He affected to confide to him his own determination of suicide, and agreed with Saadat Khan that each should take poison. The latter drank his cup full, and left the hoary schemer without a rival in the Empire."

Such in brief is the rise of the founder of the Principality of Oudh. The English writer who has been quoted so often before says :

"He (Saadat Khan) reaped much as he had sown ; his ability and management established a sovereignty ; his faithlessness brought him to a premature and ignominious end. He proved no exception to the rule, that they who are busiest in entrapping others, are themselves the easiest deluded."

Sadat Khan died comparatively young, for he had hardly completed fifty years at the time of his death. He left no male issue but a daughter. His two nephews, who were the sons of his elder brother, contended for the throne. They were named Sher Jang and Safdar Jang. Nadir Shah was at that time in Delhi. As he was the conqueror and the Mughal Emperor was a non-entity, each of the two brothers, nephews of Sadat Khan, applied to Nadir instead of to the Emperor for the investiture of Oudh. Safdar Jang, though the younger, was abler and more cunning than his elder brother. He was married to his cousin, the daughter of Sadat Khan. Moreover, he knew that it was gold which was the real 'open sesame' with Nadir. Accordingly, he backed up his petition with an offer of a *nazzar* of two millions sterling, and so he was invested with the government.

It was this Safdar Jang who was first invested with the *vizarel* of the Mugal Empire. The Nizam-ul-Mulk was the original *Vazir* of the Empire, but on his resigning

that honour it was conferred on the Viceroys of Oudh, in whose dynasty it became hereditary. Hence these princes are known in history as *Nawab Vazirs.* Safdar Jang was the first *Nawab Vazir,* and he is said to have sustained the tottering authority of the King of Delhi.

It was during the regime of this Safdar Jang, that war against the Rohillas was conducted, an event which was so pregnant with future evils. It is not necessary to refer to other historical events which took place during the Viceroyalty of Safdar Jang, because these are foreign to our subject.

Safdar Jang died in 1774 A.D. and was succeeded in the Viceroyalty of Oudh by his son named Shujà-ud-daula. It was he who was the first Nawab of Oudh to come in contact with the English. What he did for them and how the history of India would have been differently written had he not contracted an alliance with them are subjects which would be dealt with elsewhere.

The rise of the power of the English in India was so closely interwoven with the history of Oudh, that it was considered necessary to give this short sketch of the origin of the Oudh Principality.

CHAPTER X

HYDAR ALI.

It was not the Marathas alone who tried to expel the English from India, but there was another man who struggled hard for getting rid of them. It has been observed by many historians that the British had not to contend with the Muhammadans for gaining the supremacy of India. All the importaat battles had to be fought with the Hindus. The English never met with such valiant antagonists as the Marathas, the Jats, the the Gurkhas and the Sikhs. True though this observation is, yet, like all general rules, it has its exception. That exception was Hydar Ali. Hydar Ali was a Muhammadan, and in none of the contests the English engaged with him, were they ever successful. The career of Hydar Ali deserves particular notice, as he was perhaps the most formidable enemy whom the English had encountered in India.

Hydar Ali was not the representative of any ancient line of kings. There was no royal blood flowing in his veins. By his ability and valor he succeeded in carving out a principality for himself. He rose from the rank of a private soldier to, not that of a general only, but of an independent sovereign whose name inspired terror and respect in the minds of the English who were at that time pushing themselves and displacing and usurping the territories of the reigning princes of India. Till the moment of his death Hydar was the victim of the persecution of the English. It was through the fear of his growing power that the first Maratha War was undertaken. Peace was hurriedly concluded with the Marathas because of the threatening attitude which Hydar had assumed towards the British. All these will be made clear as we proceed in our narrative of Hydar.

Hydar was a private soldier in the employ of the Raja of Mysore. The Muhammadans ruled over India for nearly 700 years. But during those seven centuries, they never succeeded in bringing Mysore under their sway. It was reserved for Hydar to do what the Muhammadan Emperors in their palmiest days failed to achieve. It was this absence of Muhummadan influence in the South which accounts for the grossest forms of superstition which prevail there.

The grandfather of Hydar was one Muhammad Bhailol, an Afghan by nationality and a member of that clan which had founded the Lodi dynasty in India, which was uprooted by Babar in 1526. Muhammad Bhailol was a Fakir and he came to the Deccan and settled at Gulbarga. He had two sons ; of whom, the younger named Ali Muhammad, migrated to Kolar, in the eastern part of Mysore, where he died about 1678 leaving four sons , the youngest of whom was Fateh Muhammad, the father of Shahbaz and the celebrated Hydar. Fateh Muhammad was made a Faujdar in Mysore and received Budikota as a jagir. The exact year of the birth of Hydar is a matter of dispute. According to some authorities it is 1717, while others place it at 1722.

Tippoo Sultan

Hyder Ali

Narain Rao Peshwa

The Rajas of Mysore were mere puppets in the hands of their ministers. Just as the descendants of Shivaji lacked in ability and administrative capacity, which obliged the ministers to take all the power out of the hands of the incapable Satara Rajas, so the Mysore Rajas had for the same reasons to resign all their sovereign powers into the hands of their ministers. At the time when the French and the English were struggling in the Carnatic, the ministers of the Raja of Mysore were Deoraj and Nunjeraj. The French were enabled to bring Nunjeraj to their assistance at Trichinopoly.

It is necessary to say that the struggle between the English and the French had its origin in the succession to the Nizamat, for which there were two claimants. The English took the part of the one, the French that of the other. The two claimants were Nasir Jang and his nephew Muzaffar Jang. Muzaffar Jang had been nominated to the Nizamat by his predecessor Kamar-ud-din, who died in 1748. The French espoused the cause of the rightful claimant, but the English took the part of the pretender. It is foreign to our purpose to describe in detail the various aspects of the conflict between the two claimants as well as between the English and the French in Southern India. It may suffice to say that the French succeeded in installing Muzaffar Jang on the Nizamat. In this contest the Mysore troops aided the French and they bore themselves bravely. Hydar served as a volunteer under his brother Shahbaz who had obtained the command of 200 horse and 1,000 peons in the service of the Raja of Mysore. He plundered the treasure of the late Nizam, with which he retreated to Mysore. Before returning, however, to Mysore he paid a visit to the French settlement of Pondicherry; he admired the discipline of the French troops and the skill of their engineer officers.

During the war, while serving as a volunteer under his brother, the ardour, the courage, and the mental resources which Hydar exhibited attracted the attention of the Chief Minister of Mysore, named Nanjeraj, who appointed him in 1755, as Faujdar or military governor of Dindigul. From this period it was the ambition of Hydar to become the sole sovereign of Southern India. He employed in his service French artificers to prepare canons and ammunitions in his arsenal which he established at Dindigul.

Hydar was totally illiterate. He could neither read nor write. When he was appointed Faujdar of Dindigul, he engaged the services of a Maratha Brahmin, named Khande Rao, to assist him in keeping his accounts and carry on his correspondence. This Brahman's name is inseparably associated with the rise of Hydar. It was through the instrumentality of this Brahman that the queen-mother tried to induce Hydar to release her son the Raja from the thraldom of the ministers. She succeeded in getting rid of the obnoxious ministers. But the condition of her son did not fare better under the galling yoke of Hydar. It was an exchange of King Log for King Stork. When Khande Rao realized this, when he found that he had betrayed the Raja into the hands of an upstart, he reproached himself for this improper act. The ministers, or rather the minister—for Deoraj was dead and Nunjeraj alone was alive—though tyrants, were after all Hindus. Belonging to the same creed, they could sympathize with their master and his subjects. But the Muhammadan upstart did not cherish any reverential feeling for the Hindu Raja, who in his eyes was a *Kafir*.

Khande Rao now tried to undo the mischief, and for this purpose, invited the Marathas, to his assistance. Although the Marathas came, and although Hydar suffered some reverses at their hands, yet fortune favoured him. The Maratha force was recalled hastily to Puna, for it was about this time that the flower of the Maratha Army found their graves on the fatal battlefield of Panipat. This left Hydar free to pursue his career of conquest uninterrupted, for a few years at all events. First of all he had to punish his quondam Private Secretary Khande Rao. This Maratha Brahmin had collected a large army and taken possession of several forts. Hydar reduced these forts and captured Khande Rao, whom he kept in an iron cage and fed him on rice and milk till the end of his life. He made some arrangement for the Raja's personal expenditure and took over the control of the State affairs in his own hands. Henceforth the Raja was a non-entity in the Mysore politics, and Hydar became the virtual ruler of Mysore. For the first time that province came under the rule of the followers of the Crescent. But it does not appear that Hydar bestowed all the high posts of trust, emolument and responsibility on men of his creed or kinship. The Hindus were not molested or persecuted, for Hydar was no bigot or fanatic.

Hydar was a keen observer of the men and events of his time. He noticed the process by which the British had made themselves masters of Bengal and other provinces of India. And he adopted the same methods. Thus when a pretender rose and claimed the Rajaship of Bednur, he espoused his cause, not out of any love for him, but for serving his own interests. This was in 1763. He ostentatiously undertook the reduction of Bednur for this pretender, but in reality made himself master of the same. He captured Bednur and appropriated the property of its inhabitants. The value of the property thus acquired was computed at twelve crores of rupees. Then he made short work of the pretender and those who were in power at Bednur by forwarding them to, and imprisoning them at, Madgiri, a hill fort in the eastern part of Mysore. He christened Bednur after his own name and called it Hydarnagar.

It is not necessary to refer to the war in which Hydar was engaged with the Marathas. In none of these wars, Hydar ever succeeded in gaining any material advantages over the sturdy Highlanders of the Deccan. The battle of Panipat only restrained the Marathas from uprooting the supremacy of the English in Bengal, then in its infancy. An English writer says :

> "By the temporary depression of their confederacy it deterred the Marathas from an attack upon Bengal in which they would probably have been joined by Shuja and Shah Alam, and would perhaps have succeeded in extirpating the still slender and struggling power of the British Company."*

Hydar Ali had to purchase peace with the Marathas at enormous sacrifices. It was these defeats which rankled in his breast and made him betray the Marathas to their European enemies. Hydar was a valiant soldier, but not a statesman. The Maratha Confideracy possessed in the great Nana Fadnavis, a statesman of a very superior order and one who was gifted with a prophetic vision into the future. So when the Marathas

* H. G. Keene's Madhova Rao Sindhia, p. 46.

proposed to Hydar for an alliance against the English, he; lacking in all sense of honor, divulged the secret to the English. The writer of the monograph on Hydar Ali says:

"It redounds to the credit of Haidar Ali that, when the Mahrattas proposed in 1771, to settle their differences with him by an engagement that he should assist them in subjugating the eastern provinces, he made known their proposals to the English authorities. He frankly stated his opinion that such a union would give the Mahrattas so predominant an influence that it would seriously imperil his own position, and added that, if his alliance were rejected by the Madras Government, he should have no alternative but to seek assistance from the French."*

This betrayal of the Marathas hardly redounds to the credit of the Muhammadan upstart. Had he been a statesman, his self-interest would have dictated him not to take this suicidal step. What were the consequences of this betrayal? The English were smarting under the defeat they had sustained at the hands of Hydar. They, therefore, did not care to enter into an alliance with him. The French were not in a position to render any assistance to Hydar. A few military adventurers of no status in society were no doubt in his employ, but the French Government had other concerns nearer home to engage their attention. Hydar also must have been aware of the fact, that the French were losing every advantage they ever possessed in India and were being ousted by the English. Under these circumstances his seeking alliance with the French, does not redound much to his credit as a statesman. The only proper course for him to adopt was to enter into an alliance with the Marathas. Had he done that, his power would have been established on a permanent footing and his dynasty would have, in all probability, been still ruling over Mysore. The Marathas, with all their faults, were ever true to their engagements. They suffered by the betrayal of the secret by Hydar Ali. It was the betrayal of this secret which brought the ever detestable Mr. Mostyn to Puna for "the purpose of fomenting domestic dissensions."

All the misfortunes which befell the Marathas were due in the first instance to their being betrayed by Hydar Ali. It is not to be wondered at, that the astute Nana Fadnavis penetrating into the cause of the misfortunes should have assisted in those operations which resulted in the extinction of the kingdom established by the illiterate Muhammadan upstart.

Hydar had always come out victorious in his contests with the English. From 1767 till his death, which took place on Dec. 7, 1782, he had been engaged in several actions with them, and it was his sound generalship which made him always triumphant over his adversaries. He was the most formidable Muhammadan enemy whom they had ever encountered. The brilliancy of his achievements dazzled his enemies.

It was the English who were the aggressors, for in 1767 they invaded his territory Baramahal, under the pretence that it belonged to the Carnatic. The English overran the territory, but were unable to take possession of the country or make any impression on the strong forts. It is not necessary to mention all the incidents of the war, in which sometimes Hydar, sometimes the English seemed to gain the day, but at first without any decisive results. The English, however, with many contrivances succeeded

Bowring's Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, p. 83.

in inducing the Nizam and Mahommed Ali (the Nabob of Arcot) to desert Hydar. Deserted by his allies, threatened by the Marathas and owing to the newness of his Government in Mysore, which could hardly dispense with his presence from his capital for a long time, the position of Hydar was a very precarious one. In September 1768, he made overtures for peace. But the Christians received his overtures with great contempt; for these overtures made them think that their enemy was weak, and that they would succeed in speedily conquering his realm. When he found the English disinclined for peace, he made great preparations and displayed increasing vigor. He sent in November 1768, his Lieutenant Fazliullahkhan to reduce the smaller posts held by the enemy, which easily fell into his hands. By the end of the year 1768 he repossessed all the territories which had temporarily fallen into the hands of the English. The English officers were now completely prostrate before Hydar. The Madras Government became alarmed, and they despatched Captain Brooke to offer terms of peace. It was now Hydar's turn to pay back the English in their own coin. He told their envoy :

"I am coming to the gates of Madras, and I will there listen to the propositions the Governor and Council may have to make,"

The envoy returned to Madras crestfallen, and hostilities were resumed. Hydar sent away all his heavy baggage and plunder home and proceeded towards Madras. He performed the march of 130 miles in three days and a half and appeared suddenly on the St. Thomas' Mount, five miles from Madras. The English were struck with consternation. Had Hydar chosen, he could have easily captured Madras. But for some inexplicable reasons, he showed great magnanimity and generosity which the English could not have expected from their conqueror. Hydar sent a message to the Governor, requiring that a negotiation for peace should be immediately opened and that in the meantime the approach of the army in the field should be forbidden. The Madras Government deputed Mr. Du Pre to meet him. Hydar dictated his own terms to the English, which they were compelled to accept. These terms were reduced into the form of a treaty, which was concluded on the 4th of April 1769. The principal conditions of this treaty were : first, a mutual restitution of conquests; and secondly, mutual aid, and alliance in defensive wars. The district of Karur which was then held by Muhammad Ali, the Nawab of Arcot, was surrendered to Hydar. This was done as a stroke of policy, for in this way, the breach between Hydar and Muhammad Ali was widened. The actual amount of war indemnity which the English had to pay to Hydar is difficult to state. Their humiliation was quite complete. According to a French writer, Hydar directed the English to affix a derisive caricature to one of the gates of fort St. George, in which the Governor and his Council were represented as on their knees before Hydar, who held Mr. Du Pre by the nose, drawn in the shape of an elephant's trunk which poured forth guineas and pagodas. The vanquished military officer, Colonel Smith, was shown holding the treaty in his hand and breaking his sword in two.

The English were obliged to conclude the treaty with Hydar, but they never intended to fulfill its terms. They seized every opportunity to violate the conditions

on which Hydar offered them peace. The Court of Directors, whose sole concern was to make profit out of India, severely reprimanded the conduct of the Madras Government, for the one visible effect of the Treaty was the sixty per cent. reduction in the price of East India Stock. The Directors accused the Madras Presidency of irresolution and incapacity and told them that by the manner in which t e Presidency had carried on the war and made peace at the dictation of the enemy;

"They had laid a foundation for the natives of Hindustan to think they may insult the Company at pleasure with impunity." The Presidency affirmed that they "were compelled to make peace for want of money to make war."

By the treaty the English bound themselves to assist Hydar in all his defensive wars. An occasion soon occurred which made Hydar solicit their aid. The ubiquitous Marathas invaded, for the fourth time, Hydar's dominion. He demanded the aid of the Madras Presidency. But the English did not come to his assistance. It was at this time that the Maratha Government proposed to Hydar to enter into an alliance against the Engish, which Hydar not only refused, but also made known to the English. When Hydar found that the English did not come to his assistance, he purchased peace of the Marathas by offering them a large sum of money and giving them in pledge some of his richest districts. Thus he got rid of the Marathas in June 1772. But as mentioned, he did not exhibit any statesmanship in not entering into an alliance with them and also in betraying them to the English.

Hydar was relieved now of the presence of the Marathas in his dominions and so proceeded to his conquest of Kurg. He affected to regard that province as tributary to Mysore and hence his invasion of it. He found no difficulty in subduing it.

Hydar was taking note of the events which were rapidly developing in Puna. The Peshwa Mahadeva Rao had been dead; his younger brother, Narain Rao, was assassinated. The murderer Raghoonath Rao had been trying to oust the posthumous son of the murdered Peshwa Narain Rao. Hydar thought the time had come for him to repossess the districts which he had given in pledge to the Marathas. For this purpose he sent his son, Tipu, who did not find any difficulty in carrying out the order of his father.

The great Nana Fadnavis, seeing how the English had been guilty of breach of faith with the Marathas and how they were supporting the murderer Raghoba, proposed to Hydar for the second time in 1780, an alliance against the English. He offered him certain advantageous terms. The province of Mysore was a tributary to the Peshwa's Government, for its ruler had to pay the Marathas the customary *chouth*. Nana Fadnavis offered a reduction of the amount of *chouth* and in addition to this, he agreed to Hydar's keeping the districts which he had given the Marathas in pledge and which were retaken by Tipu. To carry out these negotiations, Nana desptached an ambassador named Ganesh Rao. Hydar had his grievances against the English, for he found to his cost, that they had not fulfilled the terms of the treaty concluded by them at Madras. He solicited their aid when the Marathas had invaded his dominion. But the English violated the solemn agreement they had entered into by refusing their assistance to Hydar.

When Hydar was on the eve of war, the English despatched to his court their well-known missionary Schwartz, apparently to amuse and keep Hydar inactive while they were at war with the Marathas. But Hydar was not again to be beguiled. He narrated all his grievances again them. When Schwartz returned unsuccessful to Madras, that Government tried again to enter into an alliance with Hydar and for this purpose they sent their envoy Mr. Gray to him. But Hydar reproached the Christians for their want of faith and rejected all the proposals urged by Mr. Gray, whom he studiously insulted and treated rather as a spy than as an ambassador.

In the prosecution of this war, Hydar showed his characteristic vigor and generalship. In July 1780, he swooped down upon the territories of the Nawab of Carnatic, then in alliance with the Christians. The Government of Madras were quite unprepared to resist this invasion. Their usual excuse was, what could they do, as they had no money. However, they decided to call the troops together and form an army in the field, and the Governor-General and Council were importuned for money. In the Carnatic, Hydar met with hardly any resistance. He was hailed as a deliverer, because the people had been extremely oppressed and their minds completely alienated by the sort of government that had been established in that country by the Nawab with the alliance of the English. It is on official record, that while the English officer, Colonel Cosby, found himself in the greatest distress for intelligence, every motion of his own was promptly communicated to Hydar. It need hardly be added that this officer was completely nonplussed by the superior tactics of Hydar.

Madras itself was threatened, for on the 10th August 1780, a party of Hydar's horse committed ravages as near as St. Thomas' Mount. Now the Madras Government roused themselves from their torpor. They directed Colonel Harper, then in command of the Guntur detachment, to proceed at once southward. Colonel Braithwaite commanding at Pondicherry was ordered to Madras and a force from Trichinopoly was instructed to intercept the communications of Hydar; detachments were at the same time despatched to occupy the forts of their ally, Muhammad Ali, in the Carnatic, *viz.*, Wodiarpaliam, Jinji, Karnatikgarh and Wandiwash.

With his superior tactics and large force and the able generalship, not of himself but of distinguished French officers, notably Monsieur Lally, then in his employ, it was not too much to expect that Hydar would succeed in driving out the English from Southern India. But such was not the will of Providence. India had to pass, for disciplinary purposes, through the unsympathetic rule of the natives of England. And so it happened that Hydar committed a mistake which enabled Colonel Braithwaite to reach Madras safely from Pondicherry. Mill writes:

"Colonel Braithwaite, after sending away from Pondicherry all the French officers capable of service, and taking an oath from the principal Frenchmen who remained, commenced his march. He arrived at Carangoly on the 12th of August, and found it garrisoned by only a petty officer of the Nabob and twenty sepoys. They would have surrendered it, as he was well assured, on the very first summons; and had it not by a singular oversight, as it commanded the only road by which Braithwaite could proceed, been neglected by the enemy, who had a large body of horse in its

neighbourhood, the most serious consequences might have ensued. The country through which he passed after leaving Carangoly would have rendered it so difficult for him to escape, if attacked by the enemy, that he formed a very contemptible opinion either of Haidar's military skill, or his means of offence, when he allowed so favourable an opportunity to be lost."

Then again, the whole brunt of the war had to be borne by Hydar. It has been already mentioned that there were three parties who had agreed to simultaneously wage war against the English. One party was the Maratha Confederacy under the guidance of that remarkable statesman, Nana Fadnavis, the second party was the Nizam and the third was Hydar himself. The manner in which the English succeeded in detaching two of the most important chiefs from the confederacy has already been related. Now, it was the turn of the Nizam, who had to be coaxed and threatened to withdraw himself from being one of the parties to the war. To disarm his hostility, Warren Hastings restored to him Guntur, which had been made over to the Nawab of the Carnatic named Muhammad Ali. Moreover, with that remarkable capacity for mendacity which the English possessed, they played on the fear of the Nizam, by spreading a false rumour that the Emperor of Delhi had secretly promised to confer on Hydar the Viceroyalty of the Deccan.

But that which prevented the expulsion of the English from Southern India was the death of Hydar himself in the midst of his successful career on the 7th December, 1782. Do not all these facts show that Providence wished that the English should rule over India ?

Now to revert to the war. Hydar proceeded to invest Arcot, which he raised on hearing that the Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army, Sir Hector Munro, was, with a large army under him, about to take the field against him. Sir Hector reached Conjeveram on the 29th August and awaited there the arrival of the Guntur Force under the command of Colonel Baillie, but that Force could not join Sir Hector on account of a sudden fall of rain which prevented the crossing of the river. On the 10th September, Baillie was attacked by Hydar and was utterly routed. All his men were either slain or made prisoners. According to the French authorities 700 English were killed and 2000 taken prisoners, among whom were Baillie and Sir David Baird. This disaster was the most fatal that had ever overtaken the English in India, and Hydar had it commemorated at Seringapatam by an elaborate painting on the walls of Darya Daulat Garden.

When the news of the disaster reached Calcutta, Warren Hastings proposed that a sum of 15 lacs of Rupees, and a large detachment of European infantry and artillery, should immediately be sent to Madras under the command of Sir Eyre Coote. The war with the Marathas had not yet been concluded and so he recommended that an offer of peace should be made without delay to the Maratha State. Francis agreed with Hastings regarding the conclusion of peace with the Marathas on any terms which they would accept, but he objected to the despatch of money and men to Madras on the grounds of the indigence and dangers of the Bengal Government, of the probability of mismanagement on the part of the Government of Madras, and lastly, of the resources which that Government still possessed. But Mr. Francis was

now in the minority, and so he did not succeed in preventing the Bengal Government from spending a large sum of money out of the revenues of the famine-stricken population of Bengal on an unjust war. At the same time, as said before, the Governor-General won over the Nizam, by restoring Guntur and giving curreney to the false report that Hydar had been secretly offered the Viceroyalty of the Deccan by the Mughal Emperor.

Sir Eyre Coote could not proceed to Madras by land, as Mudaji Bhonslé, the Regent of Berar, although won over by Warren Hastings, had to keep up appearances with the other members of the Maratha Confederacy and as he had been ordered by the head of the Confederacy, represented by Nana Fadnavis, to invade Bengal. Mudaji Bhonslé was a traitor in the camp of the Marathas. He communicated beforehand to the Governor-General intelligence of his sending 30,000 troops to Bengal apparently for the purpose of invasion, but in reality to please Nana Fadnavis, and he promised to the Governor-General that by means of delay he would contrive that his tropps should not reach the borders of Bengal till the rains had begun.

Sir Eyre Coote with his army landed at Madras on the 5th November. Except relieving a few of the garrisons which had been besieged by the troops of Hydar, it does not appear that Coote succeeded in making any impression on Hydar's Army. He was disgusted with the conduct of the members of the Madras Government. In his letters to the Directors and ministers of the King, Coote "drew a picture in the darkest colors, not only of the weak and disastrous condition into which the country was brought, but of the negligence and incapacity, if not the corruption and guilt of those servants of the Company, under whose mismanagement such misfortunes had arrived." As his situation was not tolerable to the Madras Government, he insisted on relinquishing the command of the army and on the 28th of September 1782, set sail for Bengal.

Hydar had not yet been vanquished. He was in the midst of his career of conquest when, fortunately for the British, he died on the 7th December, 1782. The death of Hydar was a very fortunate event for the British, not because it brought the war to a close, or because peace was concluded with Mysore, but because it made Nana ratify the treaty of Salbye entered into sometime May 1782. Although the Nizam had deserted him, and Sindhia and the Berar Regent had proved traitors, Nana Fadnavis did not still lose all hopes of success as long as he saw Hydar in the field against the English. As there was no understanding between him and Hydar's successor, Tipu, Nana was obliged to ratify the treaty of Salbye. Had not Hydar's death occurred at this moment, it is probable that Nana would have renewed war against the English.

The death of Hydar Ali was a great loss to the Mysoreans as well as the Marathas. Hydar was altogether free from fanaticism. Usurper as he was, it does not appear that he was cruel to those whom he subjugated and brought under his rule. He was unscrupulous, but that was mainly due to his receiving no education of any sort while a youth. No greater mistake can be committed than that of comparing Hydar Ali with the great Shivaji. Excepting that both of them were illiterate and good soldiers, there was nothing common between them. Hydar was an usurper, which

the other was not; and since he was so, he depended on extraneous help to confirm his authority, and to enable him to carry on his warfare. Without the aid of the French, Hydar's rise would not have been significant and assumed importance in the eyes of the English. As said before, Hydar's statesmanship was not of a high order. In this respect, he can hardly be compared to Shivaji or even his contemporary Nana Fadnavis. But perhaps, his very precarious position, namely, that of an usurper, precluded him from taking a statesmanlike view of the political problems of the day. For what is statesmanship? Schopenhauer writes that "right in itself is powerless; in nature it is might that rules. To enlist might on the side of right so that by means of it right may rule, is the problem of statesmanship." Because he trampled on right when he usurped the sovereign power of Mysore, he could not have been expected to be a statesman. His guilty conscience precluded him from being so. He betrayed, as has been said before, the Marathas by divulging to the English the substance of the secret treaty which Nana Fadnavis had proposed to him. He would have shown statesmanship, had be acted on that proposal.

He was an upstart, an usurper and a free-booter, which Shivaji was not.* The appearance of Shivaji was hailed with delight by an expectant nation, as that of the promised Messiah, because he represented the aspirations of the people of the Deccan. Hydar, on the other hand, was an upstart who tried to impose his will on others; he depended on outside help, for he received no support from within the territories he ruled over.

Hydar possessed many good qualities of the head and the heart. He was a born soldier, an excellent rider, and skilful alike with his sword and his gun. He was entirely free from bigotry, and never cared what faith his officials followed, so long as they obeyed his orders. There can be no doubt that he was a born leader of men and that his administrative qualities were of a very high order. He appointed Hindus to all the high posts of administration under him and he never had any cause to regret his choice of them. They were faithful to him even after his death. For it is related that when his end was approaching, his ministers, both Hindu, named Purniya and Krishna Rao,

> "took every precaution to conceal the gravity of his malady from the army. Immediately after his death, express messengers on fleet camels were despatched to apprise Tipu of the event, and to urge his return with all speed, while Haidar's body having been embalmed, was forwarded privately to Kolar in a coffin resembling a chest containing valuable spoil. Matters were so well arranged that the secret of his demise was kept for many days, not only from the English, but from his own army, only the most trusted officers being made acquainted with the occurrence. The troops marched westward, Haidar's closed palankeen being carried with the army as if containing an invalid."†

But the same cannot be said of the French on whom he depended for help. He showed a deplorable lack of foresight and judgment in relying on the people of another creed, color and nationality for military assistance. It was not sound statesmanship to

Rise of the Maratha Power, p. 2.
Bowring's Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, p. 118.

have placed Frenchmen in all offices of trust and responsibility in his army. How they proved unfaithful will be related when we come to speak of the fall of Tipu. But in his life-time also, he had every reason to be dissatisfied with their conduct. The same Christian author who has been quoted above, writes.:

"Haidar certainly failed in accomplishing the object he had in view at the close of his long and stormy career. But his want of success was mainly due to the supineness of the French Government, which reserved all its strength for its operations against us in North America, and seemed quite indifferent to recovering the prestige it had lost in India. Had it despatched a sufficient army to the Caromandel Coast when Haidar was operating against the Madras forces, there can be little doubt that Fort St. George would have fallen, and that the British authority would have been supplanted by the French flag."

But this was not the will of Providence.

As a soldier, Hydar, in his life-time, was without any equals in India and without many in the world.

"He was a bold, and original, and an enterprising commander, skilful in tactics, and fertile in resources, full of energy and never desponding in defeat."

He knew the wants of his times and as a born soldier, he tried to emulate the Europeans in their arts of war. It was this very ambition which made him seek the assistance of the French. He was not indifferent also to the defence of his coast line. He was the only Indian prince of his time who organized and maintained a navy. His rudimentary navy was destroyed by the English.

His death was a loss to the Marathas. For, as stated before, Nana Fadnavis would not have ratified the Treaty of Salbye, had not Hydar died in the midst of his successful career. The result of the last war with the English, Hydar did not live to see. But it is well-known that his successor Tipu achieved success in that war. There can be no doubt that Nana Fadnavis would have renewed the war against the English and perhaps succeeded in uniting the members of the Maratha Confederacy and bringing Madhava Rao Sindhia to terms, had not the death of Hydar dashed all his hopes to the ground. From all these, who could fail to see that Providence wished that the English should rule India?

CHAPTER XI.

THE RISE OF THE NIZAM'S DYNASTY.

The history of the rise of the first Nizam derives its importance, from the fact that he was the first servant of the Mughal Emperor to deal the death-blow at the supremacy of his master's rule in India. The downfall of the Mughal Rule was due not a little to the example set by the Nizam. He was a traitor to his sovereign and his country, and his rise was due to treachery, intrigue, cunning and the many questionable means which he adopted. The dynasty which he founded has never been distinguished for any prodigious deeds of valor or acts of generosity.* But it has nevertheless played a conspicuous part in the history of British India.

After the death of Aurangzeb, his effeminate successors had neither the foresight and sagacity of statesmen and administrators, nor the courage and bravery of warriors and generals. As a result of these defects in the rulers, the real power was in the hands of the ministers. It was under these circumstances, that the two Sayyid brothers, named Abdullah Khan and Husain Ali Khan, came to possess great influence in the declining days of the Mughal Rule. They are known in history as king-makers. But whatever faults these two brothers were guilty of, they had the welfare of the Empire at heart. Writers of Indian history have not yet done justice to these two brothers. These king-makers were sincerely desirous of saving from ruin the Empire founded by Babar and extended by Akbar. As long as they maintained influence in the court of the degenerate Emperors, the Empire was not broken up into pieces. But the murder of the one and the imprisonment of the other precipitated the downfall of the Empire. When we unravel the tangled web of the last days of the Mughal Empire, we find that the Nizam-ul-Mulk was a prominent actor in those days. The death of the one and the imprisonment of the other of the king-makers were due to his machinations. The dissensions among the nobles of the Mughal Empire were likewise his doings. The viceroys of the distant provinces imitated his example in throwing off their allegiance to the Emperor and declaring themselves independent.

It was he who instigated, incited and helped the Marathas in creating troubles in the territories then under the suzerainty of the Emperor and he is also suspected of having induced Nadir Shah to invade Hindustan.

* Major Evans Bell, in his work on "The Empire in India," p. 34, in a foot-note says :—"And yet the Nizam has never been exactly a popular Prince * * His government has never been popularly credited with that liberality of rewards and promotions, on great occasions, to the humbler class of its servants, particularly to its soldiers after victory, which glorifies the vulgar notion of Sivajee, Tippoo and Ranjit Sing. * * And thus, in consequence of the prevalent habit of the common people in every country, who endow the Prince, noble, or landlord of the day with special hereditary gifts or defects, the Nizam has much less prestige, and much less general influence, beyond his own frontiers, than several Maratha and Sikh potentates of very inferior possessions."

Again, when we trace the history of the Europeans in India, whether of the French or English nationality, we find his dynasty asking for their co-operation, which brought about the supremacy of the Europeans in this country.

From these considerations, then, the history of the rise of the Nizam deserves our careful attention.

The man known as the first Nizam-ul-Mulk, but whose real name was Chin-Kilich Khan, was a Turany noble. He was appointed at one time the Governor of Moradabad in Rohilkhand. The Deccan was not his original satrapy. It was during the reign of the Emperor Ferokh Siar, the great-grandson of Aurangzeb, that the two Sayyid brothers named above, came to possess great influence at the Imperial Court of that ruler. Abdullah Khan was the Vazir, and Hussain Ali Khan was the Viceroy of the Deccan. The Nizam-ul-Mulk supplanted the latter in his Viceroyalty. The Deccan was the theatre of those acts of the Marathas which led them to the supreme rule of almost the whole of India. When the younger Sayyid brother was the Viceroy of the Deccan, the Marathas had not yet gained much territorial concession in the rich Mughal Provinces of Khandesh and Malwa. But in those provinces the Marathas had their officers to collect the *chouth* or fourth part of the gross revenue, alloted to them under former treaties. The author of the *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin* writes that

> "This impost (*i. e., chouth*) had been extended throughout the Deckan ten or twelve years after the demise of the Emperor Aurangzib, at a time of the civil war, and when the princes of the Imperial Court, fully occupied by their own intestine broils, had no time to attend to the affairs of those distant parts."*

It was not very easy for the Marathas to collect their *chouth*. They had to assume the part of the aggressors in the realization of this impost. During the time when Abdullah Khan was the Viceroy of the Deccan several conflicts had taken place between the Marathas and the Viceroy's troops. Although the Marathas were always successful, yet it is not unreasonable to suppose that they would not have so easily made themselves masters of the rich and fertile provinces of Malwa, Khandesh and Guzerat, had there been an energetic and loyal Mughal Viceroy in the Deccan. Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan was a man of energy and character. It was a fatal day for the Mughal Empire in India when he left the Deccan. His brother Abdullah Khan was the Vazir of the Delhi Emperor. Selfish and interested persons at the Imperial Court were busy intriguing to ruin the two brothers and more especially the Vazir Abdullah Khan. When Hussain Ali Khan, who was at that time at Aurangabad, the capital of his Viceroyalty of the Deccan, became aware of the danger which was threatening the safety of his brother and his family, he left the Deccan and marched on to Delhi with the intention of crushing all his enemies. Of those who had conspired for the destruction of the influence of the Sayyid brothers, the Nizam-ul-Mulk's was a very prominent figure. He left his own government of Moradabad and with all his retinue and followers amounting to several thousand men repaired to Delhi, because he had been given to understand that he would be appointed the Viceroy of the Deccan, if he

* P. 93. Brigg's translation. Allahabad Reprint.

helped in destroying the influence of the Sayyids. It is necessary here to remark that the Nizam-ul-Mulk had never received any injury from any of the members of the Sayyid family. His eagerness, therefore, to crush the Sayyids betrays a very low and mean nature. When he came to Delhi, he found that the Emperor Ferokh-Siar, surrounded by self-seeking courtiers, neglected him and deprived him of the governorship of Moradabad. In his bitter chagrin and disappointment, he joined the cabal formed to destroy the Sayyids. The Vazir Sayyid Abdullah Khan, when he came to know of the conspiracy that had been formed against him, ordered twenty-five thousand horses to be raised forthwith. His brother was also on full march towards Delhi, which he reached in due time. These circumstances frustrated the designs of the conspirators. Nay, the Vazir even succeeded in gaining over the principal conspirators to his party, the Nizam-ul-Mulk being one of them. The Vazir gave him hopes that he would be appointed to the government of Malwa. The Emperor was now utterly nonplussed. He knew not what to do. Perfectly devoid of courage and self-reliance he found himself deserted by those on whose advice and promises he had depended for bringing the Sayyid brothers to ruin. The Vazir Abdullah Khan now found his opportunity, for he went to the Emperor and addressed him in the following language:

"In return for the important services we have rendered you in times of weakness and distress; in return for the blood our family have shed in your service, as we had already done in that of our father and grandfather, such faithful servants have experienced nothing but mistrust and suspicion, and a variety of plots have been contrived against our lives and honour.*

The Emperor, perceiving his real situation, retired into the sanctuary or women's apartment. As usual at such critical times, some nobles, incensed at the Emperor Ferokh Siar's reverse of fortune, considered themselves duty bound to come to his assistance and to support his defenders. But the Nizam-ul-Mulk was not one of them. Nor did he go to the Vazir's assistance, but he thought it most prudent to stay at home. A calculating and self-seeking man, that was the method he adopted for watching the course of events. There was now a regular fight between the adherents of the Emperor and those of the Vazir. These fightings and skirmishes took place in the streets of Delhi. After all the Vazir's troops gained the day, for it is related by the author of the Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, that

"A body of Afghan soldiers, mixed up with some of the Vezir's slaves, found means from the top of the house of Nejm-ed-din Alikhan, the Vezir's youngest brother, to descend within the yard of the king's female apartments, which proved to be guarded by a number of Abyssinian, Georgian, and Calmuc women. These being driven away, the soldiers penetrated within the gate, and every apartment was searched for Ferok Siar. At last some women, too delicate to bear the tortures to which they were exposed, pointed to the place of his confinement, and the soldiers ran to him, * * * he was dragged upon the ground and thrown into a small dark room."†

In this way, the voluptuous, effeminate, and incompetent Mughal Emperor was disposed of by the Vazir. It is much to his credit, that he did not

* *Ibid*,. 116.

† *Ibid*, p. 120.

usurp the royal power. It would have been in keeping with the circumstances of the situation, and perhaps better for the welfare of the Empire, had he proclaimed himself as the King or Emperor, instead of assuming the humble role of Vazir and King-maker. In many respects, the circumstances of the time resembled those of the days after the execution of Charles I of England. The Vazir had his prototype in Cromwell. As Cromwell saved England, by becoming the Protector, so would have Sayyid Abdullah Khan, had he himself assumed the royalty. The English people rose and beheaded their King, because tyranny was rampant everywhere in their country, and because odious taxes were imposed on them. When the Sayyid named above made the Emperor Ferokh-Siar a prisoner, the people of Hindustan, chiefly Hindus, were becoming alienated from their Muhammadan sovereigns, because the latter had departed from the methods of administration introduced by the Emperor Akbar. The shortsighted policy of Aurangzeb brought on the ruin of the Mughal Empire.

After confining Ferokh Siar, the Sayyid Vazir raised one of the descendants of the house of Timur to the throne, but kept all the power in his own hands. He shewed also great statesmanship when he advised the newly created Emperor to relieve the Hindus from the poll-tax. In a foot-note to his translation of Siyar-ul-Mutakherin, Colonel Briggs writes:

"This odious (poll) tax, abolished by the wise Akbar, was renewed in the reign of Aurangzib, and had continued without intermission till this time, and it is believed by the Hindus, and by most reflecting persons well read in the history of the times, that to this impolitic measure, and the excessive impost on the land, the downfall of the Muhammadan power is mainly to be attributed."*

This Sayyid Vazir rises in our estimation, when we find that he realized the danger which was threatening the Empire, on account of the odious impost of the poll-tax and that he advised its abolition. Had he been allowed to remain as Vazir for some years longer, it is probable that the Muhammadan Empire in India would have gained a fresh lease of life. But this was not to be. His own destruction and the destruction of his family was brought about by the Nizam-ul-Mulk whom he had raised to power.

The Nizam-ul-Mulk was created by Vazir Abdullah Khan, Viceroy of Malwa. This was in 1720 A. D. As soon as he established himself in his Viceroyalty,

"He turned his attention towards increasing the number of his troops, filling his magazines, exercising his officers and soldiers, and in making new acquisitions in the district of Chandery."†

This conduct of the Nizam greatly alarmed the Vazir, who also discovered that he had been intriguing at the Imperial Court. It has been already mentioned that the Vazir's brother, Hussain Ali Khan, was the Viceroy of the Deccan. He had not yet left Delhi, when the Nizam-ul-Mulk was making all these preparations in Malwa. Naturally Hussain Ali was much concerned about the Deccan. Knowing that the Nizam-ul-Mulk was under great obligation to the Vazir, for had it not been for the kindness and generosity of the Vazir, the Nizam would have hardly come to notice, Hussain Ali, the Viceroy of the Deccan,

* *Ibid.*, p. 122.

† *Ibid.*, p. 136.

"wrote to Nizam-ul-Mulk, that as both he and his brother, with a view to put an end to the internal trouble of the Deccan wished to establish their residence in the province of Malwa, midway between the Deccan and the Capital, they hoped that to accommodate them, Nizam-ul-Mulk would take his choice of the four governments of Multan, Candeish, Acherabad, or Allahabad."*

In this proposal, there was nothing which could have offended a just and reasonable man. But Nizam-ul-Mulk forgot the gratitude which he owed to the Sayyid brothers. He did not care to oblige them. The Muhammadan historian, who has been already quoted above, writes :

"This letter produced the very breach it was intended to prevent. Nizam-ul-Mulk, answered the moderate letter of Hussein Ali Khan's in a haughty style * * * He held a consultation with his friends and military chiefs, and resolved to display openly the standard of revolt. * * * These disorders afforded a bad example, so that the meanest men availed themselves of their distance from the capital to aspire at independence."†

There was no other alternative left to the Sayyid brothers but to cross blades with Nizam-ul-Mulk. That disloyal and treacherous Viceroy of Malwa was the aggressor, for he marched out of his capital, crossed the Narbuda and met the Imperial troops and gained an easy victory over them. The war lasted for several months and in it one of the Sayyid brothers was slain and the other made prisoner. These occurrences were very unfortunate for the Muhammadan supremacy in India. During the time the Sayyid brothers were at the helm of the Empire no dismemberment of the Empire had taken place. In order to prevent the threatening dissolution of that Empire, for the conduct of the Viceroy of Malwa left no doubt in their minds what the real intentions of the Nizam were, they engaged in a war which cost the one his life and the other his liberty. The star of the Nizam-ul-Mulk was now in the ascendent. He became Viceroy of the Deccan also, for Hussain Ali Khan was now slain. Nizam-ul-Mulk mocked the Emperor when he congratulated him on his being relieved of the bondage of the Sayyid brothers. But he was in fact congratulating himself on the favorable turn of affairs for establishing his independence. After settling his affairs in the Deccan, he came to Delhi on the 18th January, 1722 to pay his respects to the Emperor. The author of the *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin,* who is the best and most trustworthy authority on the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire, writes that Nizam-ul-Mulk

"was on that occasion raised to the office of Vezir, and received, according to custom, the investiture of that high dignity, by being presented with a dress of four pieces and the imperial signet was placed in his hands."§

This occured on the 13th February, 1722. Eight months afterwards, that is on the 15th October, 1722, he received a dress of investiture for the government of Gujarat.

Nizam-ul-Mulk was now the most powerful subject in the Mughal Empire. He was the Vazir or Prime Minister of the Empire, as well as the Viceroy and Governor-General of the fertile provinces of Gujarat, Malwa and Deccan. But he lacked in those qualities which are necessary for properly discharging the duties of the high office

* *Ibid.,* p. 137.

† *Ibid.,* p. 137.

§ *Ibid.,* p. 216.

of the Prime Minister of the Empire. There was no threatened invasion of the Empire from without and it had not as yet to cope with any domestic rebellious worth speaking of. The Imperial Court was no doubt crowded with men of questionable character and the Emperor himself was addicted to the company of debauched and lewd men. Had Nizam-ul-Mulk been possessed of sufficient ability, tact and energy it would not have been difficult for him to clear the augean stable and save the Empire. But he was singularly devoid of those qualifications which mark statesmen and administrators and exact admiration of all.* The author of *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin* writes that Nizam-ul-Mulk's

"person and manners were the subject of ridicule as soon as he was out of sight and never failed in his absence of becoming the topic of the most pointed raillery."†

He was a consummate hypocrite and thus could not have been expected to wield power with any advantage to the State. Finding how useless he was in the government of the Empire, he resigned the high office of Vazir and proceeded to the Deccan, where he

"resolved upon revenging himself by exciting troubles and raising commotions."§

The Emperor accepted his resignation but

"honored [him] with the office of Vakil-i-muttak or Lieutenant of the Emperor; at the same time also he received the new title of Asaf-jah, and met with every demonstration of favor."**

But the Nizam-ul-Mulk repaid all these favors and acts of kindness shown to him by his sovereign by black ingratitude. On his return to the Deccan towards the close of the year 1724, he

"wrote to Hamid Khan, his maternal uncle, Governor of Guzerat, to commence hostilities, in combination with Sillaji and Kantaji, two Mahratta Commanders whom he employed to make incursions into the imperial territories. Hamid Khan on this intimation raised the standard of defiance, and seizing on all the *jaghires* or estates belonging to the several nobles now at Court, expelled their stewards."††

When the news of these proceedings reached the Imperial Court at Delhi, an army was sent to Gujarat. After many bloody contests the Imperial troops were successful and Gujarat came once more, although for a short time only, under the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor.

The Delhi Emperor deprived the Nizam-ul-Mulk of the Viceroyalty of Malwa and bestowed it on a Hindoo noble named Raja Giri-dhar. The Nizam-ul-Mulk was now stung to the quick. He left no stone unturned to bring the Emperor, to whom he was

* "A statesman," writes Lord Rosebery, "measures the opinions and forces that surround him, and proceeds to act accordingly; he is not laying his account with remote posterity, or legislating for it. The politician who is a century before his time is hardly more a statesman than the politician who is a century behind it."

† *Ibid.*, p. 223.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 336, 223.

** *Ibid.*, p. 224.

†† *Ibid*, p. 226.

bound to pay homage, to the brink of ruin. He forgot the duty he owed to his sovereign and the creed to which he belonged. He did not hesitate to secure the help of the Marathas to destroy the Muhammadan Empire. He engaged the Marathas to invade Hindustan. He applied to Baji Rao.

"Nizam-ul-Mulk proposed to Bajy Rao to conquer Malwa and to recover Guzerat, or at least to ruin and lay waste those two countries so as to render them of no use to his enemies. Bajy Rao and the other Mahratta chiefs assembled a mighty army, with which they invaded both Malwa and Guzerat at one and the same time."*

The Nizam-ul-Mulk was the Muhammadan Viceroy of the Mughal Emperor in the Deccan. He conspired against his sovereign to destroy the Empire. But the Hindu Viceroys of the Emperor in Malwa and Gujarat did all they could to uphold the Empire. We read in Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' that

"the grandsons of the Gauls who had besieged Julius Caesar in Alesia, commanded legions, governed provinces, and were admitted into the Senate of Rome. Their ambition, instead of disturbing the tranquility of the State, was intimately connected with its safety and greatness."

The above is very truly applicable to the Hindus under the rule of the Mughals. The Hindu governors and viceroys of the Mughals were loyal and they exerted their utmost for the safety and greatness of the Mughal Empire. Thus the author of the *Siyar-ul Mutakherin* writes that the Hindu viceroy of Malwa named

"Raja Giri-dhar, who commanded in that country with a small body of troops, would not suffer his country to be ravaged ; and being an officer of character, he engaged Bajy Rao several times after having in vain requested assistance from the capital. His repeated representations to the throne and to the ministers availed nothing, and that brave man, having wasted his small force in endless skirmishes, at last fell himself in one of them. He was succeeded in his command by Raja Dia Bahadur, a relative and son of the brave Chubilram, who, pursuing Giri-dhar's plans, did not cease to harass the Mahrattas, giving them no rest and taking none himself. He moreover wrote to the minister that, so long as he lived, he would prove a wall in the passage of the enemy towards Hindustan, but that after his death he apprehended that they would spread like an inundation all over the Empire. None of these representations produced any effect, and that brave man was also slain in defending the country."†

The Hindu Governor of Gujarat, although not so able and brave as the Hindu viceroys of Malwa, did not prove a traitor. Compare and contrast the Hindu viceroys with the Nizam-ul-Mulk and the other Muhammadan viceroys and governors. The latter proved traitors and disloyal, which the former were not. Here is a lesson for the rulers of India, who should follow the policy of the ancient Romans and the Mughals and repose confidence in the Indians by entrusting them with all the high offices of the State, for that is the only way to safeguard the Empire against foreign invasions. Lecky writes that

"On the great theatre of public life, especially in periods of great convulsions when passions are fiercely roused, it is neither the man of delicate scrupulosity and sincere impartiality, nor yet the single-minded religious enthusiast incapable of dissimulation or procrastination, who confers most benefit upon the world. It is much rather the astute statesman, earnest about his ends but unscrupulous

* *Ibid.*, p. 235

† *Ibid.*, p. 236.

about his means, equally free from the trammels of conscience and from the blindness of zeal, who governs because he partly yields to the passions and the prejudices of his time."*

Nizam-ul-Mulk would have exacted our admiration had he taken the reins of the government of the Empire, and tried to confer most benefit upon its inhabitants. He was the Vazir or Prime Minister and latterly the Vakil-i-Muttaq or Lieutenant of the Empire, and thus he had every opportunity to do good to the Empire. The times were such that he could have played the part of Cromwell and exacted the admiration of all, notwithstanding the questionable nature of his acts. But he was a traitor, and as such he does not deserve any respect.

To make friends with the Marathas, the Mughal Emperor

"thought proper to confer the government of that country on Bajy Rao himself; so that in this manner Malwa passed under the Maratha dominion.†

This was the first dismemberment of the Mughal Empire and this could not have been effected but for the treachery of Nizam-ul-Mulk. The Marathas acquired Gujarat by conquest.

Shivaji had no ambition or desire to bring the whole of India under his sway. He wanted to make the Deccan free from the rule of the Muhammadans. The constitution which he gave to his people was not meant for wielding the sovereignty of all the provinces of India. It was Nizam-ul-Mulk who awakened the ambition in the breasts of the Marathas for conquering Hindustan and establishing an Empire by supplanting the Mughals. The Marathas

"talked of nothing but of new conquests. in which they were encouraged hitherto by Nizam-ul-Mulk."§

Nizam-ul-Mulk did not remain satisfied with throwing off his allegiance to the Mughal Emperor, and encouraging and helping the Marathas to dismember the provinces of the Mughal Empire but he is also suspected of having instigated Nadir Shah to invade Hindustan. It is not necessary to mention in detail all the circumstances which preceded Nadir Shah's invasion. Nadir Shah was the Ruler of Persia and at that time, both Kabul and Kandhahar formed part of the Mughal Empire. At Kabul resided the

* Lecky's History of European Morals, page 41. This is the view of Machiavelli, whose biographer M. Villari tells us that "he (Machiavelli) clearly saw that statecraft has ways and means of its own, which are not the ways and means of private morality; that, on the contrary, the morality of private life may sometimes check a statesman in mid-career and render him vacillating without his being either a good or a bad man : and that it is mainly vacillation of this kind that leads to the downfall of states. There must be no vacillation, he said, but a daring adoption of the measures demanded by the nature of events. Such measures will always be justified, when the end is obtained. And the end in view must be the welfare of the state. He who achieves this, even if a wicked man, may be commended for glory. If, on the contrary, he should cause the ruin of the state, whether through private ambition, or from hesitation born of a good motive, he will be consigned to infamy as a wicked or incapable prince, even when as a private individual, deserving the highest praise. Such is the true meaning of Machiavelli's maxim, that the end justifies the means."

† *Ibid.*, p. 236.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

Mughal Viceroy of Afghanistan. Nadir Shah had some grievances against the Afghan subjects of the Mughal Emperor of India, to whom he made several representations, but these were unheeded. At last Nadir Shah sent an embassy to Delhi. The nobles of the Imperial Court

"looked upon the Embassy * * as a thing contrived by the Vezier Nizam-ul-Mulk and the Turany party at Court, and especially by Zakariah Khan, the Viceroy of Kabul, a relation of the Vezier." *

The conduct of the Nizam-ul-Mulk when Nadir Shah actually invaded Hindustan, lends support to the suspicion that he incited him to invade the country. The same Muhammadan historian who forms our authority on the subject of Nadir Shah's invasion and Nizam-ul-Mulk's treachery writes :

"On the first intelligence of Nadir Shah's having entered the province of Cabul, Khan Dowran and Nizam-ul-Mulk were ordered to march out to oppose him ; but they contented themselves with wasting their time in the city, after spreading reports of their intention to proceed, which they thought a piece of very refined policy."†

Again, when Nadir's troops were attacking the Emperor's, and when the Viceroy of Oudh, named Sadat Khan, went to assist his people, actually engaged with the enemy and asked for assistance, the traitor Nizam-ul-Mulk is reported to have said :

"It was already three in the afternoon ; that Sadat Khan's people must be exhausted by the length of their march and that it was unreasonable to expect them to fight that day. Let his majesty (added he), issue his commands to that general to restrain his eagerness for a few hours until tomorrow morning, when the whole army being assembled in battle array, with artillery in the front, may engage the enemy, and under his majesty's auspices obtain a glorious victory. §

It need only be added that he did not go to render assistance to Sadat Khan.

Nizam-ul-Mulk had a hand in all the troubles and disasters which befell Delhi during the invasion or rather visitation of the Persian conqueror Nadir Shah. He was secretly pleased at the humiliation to which the Delhi Emperor was subjected. Nadir Shah quitted Delhi on the 15th May, 1738. He contented himself with severing from the empire of Hindustan and adding to his own the provinces of Sindh and Kabul, with some districts of the Panjab. Nadir Shah's invasion shook the Mughal Empire to its very foundation and hastened its downfall. Nizam-ul-Mulk returned to the Deccan and declared his independence. His example was followed by the Viceroy of Bengal, named Ali Vardy Khan.

After his return to the Deccan, Nizam-ul-Mulk never meddled in the affairs of the Imperial Court at Delhi, but left his eldest son there, named Ghazi-ud-din Khan, to whom he transferred his office of the Vazir or Prime Minister of the Empire. He transferred the capital of the Deccan from Aurangabad to Hydarabad and was busy in feathering his own nest at the expense of the Empire. The Emperor Muhammad Shah died in 1747 and was succeeded by his eldest son Ahmad Shah. When Muhammud Shah ascended the imperial throne of Delhi, the Mughal Empire, though not in the zenith of its glory, had not receded an inch from the boundaries which had been fixed

* *Ibid.*, p. 276.

† *Ibid.*, p. 276.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

by Aurangzeb. But on his death the boundaries of the Empire had considerably altered for the worse. The Empire was in extremis, and its dissolution was only a question of time. Such a pitiful condition of the Empire was mainly brought about by the treachery and machinations of Nizam-ul-Mulk. He did not survive long the death of the Emperor Muhammad Shah, whom he had injured in so many ways. He died in 1748 at the reputed age of 104. He was succeeded by his second son Nasir Jang. It was this succession which brought about the first conflict between the French and the English in India.

Such in brief is the origin of the dynasty of the Nizam of Hydarabad. The founder of this dynasty is not entitled to that respect and admiration which the usurper Hydar Ali of Mysore exacts. The latter was a brave soldier and his rise was due to his personal courage, whereas Nizam-ul-Mulk rose by foul treachery and was devoid of those qualities of the head and heart which endeared Hydar to his subjects and make historians describe him as a 'born soldier and leader of men.'

CHAPTER XII

SIR JOHN MACPHERSON AS OFFICIATING GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA

After the departure of Warren Hastings from Calcutta, the senior member of the Supreme Council, who happened to be a Scotchman, named Mr. Macpherson, officiated as Governor-General of India. He had landed some time in 1767 in Madras as purser of the Mansfield Chinaman, commanded by his uncle, Captain Macleod. In his native country, he received a sound education in classics and thus acquired great facility in English composition. On landing in Madras, he got himself introduced to the Nawab of Arcot, who employed him and sent him to England to represent his grievances there.

As has been already said before, the English obtained their political footing in India by the part they took in the contest of two rivals for the throne of the Carnatic. They succeeded in establishing Muhammad Ali as the Nawab of Arcot, for which services they obtained territory from him yielding four and a half lakhs of pagodas. But the Nawab did not know the character of his Christian friends, who always made demands on him whenever they were in pecuniary difficulties. The Nawabs of the Carnatic, however, were held in great esteem by the East India Company and their representatives and servants in India. In a minute dated 4th February, 1779, the President of Fort Saint George in Council recorded :

"All attention and support is certainly due to the Nabob as our old and faithful ally, connected with us by every tie, and demanding from us every indulgence..........*who with his family, it is to be wished, may long remain instances of our national faith.*"

Great were the advantages which the English derived from their alliance with the Nawabs of the Carnatic.

No English sovereign wrote an autograph letter to any of the ruling princes of India as did George III to the Nawab of Arcot in 1771, dated 19th March. He wrote:

"We received from the hands our East India Company, in July last, your letter, accompanied with your different presents. We shall look upon the picture of yourself and your children with pleasure, as it will put us continually in mind of that affection which you have always shown towards us, and which, we have no doubt, will be hereditary to your offspring, as we are satisfied that our friendship and protection to you and your posterity will descend through our successors from generation to generation.........We have appointed to the command of our fleet Sir Robert Harland, Baronet, one of the Admirals of our Navy, and have made him Plenipotentiary to you, ordering him to deliver you this letter, and present to you a pair of pistols, out of our private armoury and some cloths of the manufacture of our country, which we pray you to accept as a token of the continuance of our esteem, of which you will be fully assured by our plenipotentiary; and we desire that you put entire confidence in whatever he shall say in our name. And so repeating our wishes for your prosperity we bid you heartily farewell......"

Thus flattered and cajoled by the English from their sovereign downwards, the Nawab took every opportunity to please them with costly presents.

Sir Charles Lawson, in his *Memories of Madras* (p. 68), writes :

"Almost immediately after his assumption of the office of Governor, Lord Macartney received an invitation from the Nabob of the Carnatic to honour him with a visit, and he promptly complied with it. Every mark of respect for his office was shown on his arrival at His Highness's palace, and he was probably thinking that his visit was one of agreeable ceremony, when the Nabob sprung upon him an offer for which he was unprepared. A brief account of what passed was given in the House of Commons on April 16, 1806, three weeks before Lord Macartney's death, by Mr. W. Keene ......(who) stated that he had been told by Lord Macartney that the Nabob invited the visit in order to present him with a sum of money equivalent to £30,000, and at the same time to make handsome money presents to the officers of his suite. Lord Macartney....expressed his astonishment to the Nabob; declined to accept the money; and inquired what had prompted His Highness to offer it. The Nabob replied that it was quite a customary present to every new Governor, and had never before been refused.....

"As the accuracy of this statement was not challenged in Parliament or elsewhere it may be assumed that the episode really occurred....The Nabob evidently was apprehensive that it might fare ill with himself if he 'failed to place the new Governor under a personal obligation.....Mr. Keene declared, when concluding his anecdote, that the 'generous integrity' of Lord Macartney 'was everywhere reviled by the servants of the Company, and every pains was taken to slander him for venturing such an innovation upon the system they had so long established'."

It is no wonder that to please his British friends, the Nawab incurred heavy debts, and his creditors mostly belonged to that race.

Macpherson was commissioned by the Nawab to go to England and plead his cause with the English ministry. He arrived in England in 1768 and approached the Prime Minister, the Duke of Grafton, and represented to him that the Nawab was being treated with indignity and tyranny by the Company, whose servants fraudulently claimed very large sums of money from him. Macpherson offered bribes or presents to the tune of several lacs of Rupees to the Minister and his secretary, who did not accept them. Then Macpherson offered to advance to the Duke seventy lacs of Rupees or even more as a loan for the public service, at a very low interest. This offer was also rejected. But the Duke's interest obtained for him a writership in Madras for which he left England early in 1770. But he was dismissed in 1776 and returned to England where he created such an agitation over the question of his dismissal, that

"Either to rid themselves of a troublesome opponent, or from a sense of his very great address and abilities, the Company promoted instead of dismissing this intriguing servant; and from the time that Macpherson had attained the rank of a member of the Supreme Council of Calcutta he had ceased to care about the surcharged debts and grievances of the Nabob of Arcot."*

Mr. Macpherson rose to be the senior member of the Council and so on the departure of Mr. Warren Hastings, occupied his vacant seat as Governor-General of India.

When he assumed the reins of Government in his hands, he found the "arrears to the army upwards of fifty lacs." He succeeded in reducing public expenditure and

Charles MacFarlane's *Our Indian Empire*, London, 1844, Vol. I, p. 227.

re-establishing public credit. No relief, however, was given to the Nawab of Oudh, who was being bled white, "from motives of delicacy to the late Governor-General (Warren Hastings), and his arrangements in the Upper Provinces."

He peremptorily resisted the demand made by Mahadji Sindhia on behalf of Shah Alam of the tribute to the extent of four crores of Rupees.

The authorities of the Company were so pleased with his able administration of the affairs of India, that he was recommended to the Crown for a Baronetcy—a recommendation which was accepted and acted upon by the then reigning sovereign, George III. But he was not offered the Governor-Generalship of India in succession to Mr. Warren Hastings.

In a private and confidential letter dated Calcutta, August 8, 1789, Lord Cornwallis wrote to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas that

"Macpherson seems to expect that you are to give him a pension, besides all the ill-earned money that he has got under the head of pay and presents. His flimsy cunning and shameless falsehoods seem to have taken in all parties; believe me that those who trusted the most in him will be the most deceived. He tells me in a letter that I received from him lately that the field is as open to him as to any other person, to be my successor in this Government. On this I cannot help saying, that, as I must always take an interest about the future prosperity of this country, I hardly know any public event which is possible to happen that would give me more concern than I should feel at his ideas being realised, nor any measure respecting India that in my opinion would tend more in its consequences to vex and discredit both you and Mr. Pitt. You may be assured that under his management a relaxation of authority in Government, and a system of mean jobbing and peculation, would immediately take place; and if in my time we shall have recovered any part of the national character for sincerity and honour with the native powers, you may depend upon it that his duplicity and low intrigues amongst them would soon completely demolish it."*

Macpherson wrote a letter to Cornwallis from London, dated March 9, 1789, published in Cornwallis Correspondence, Vol. I, pp. 429-430. Regarding this letter, the editor of the Correspondence appended the following note:

"The whole of this letter is a string of gross misrepresentations. When Sir John wrote it, he had been distinctly informed that on no consideration would he be allowed to return to India, and he was perfectly aware that nothing but a change of Government could have given him a chance of being appointed Governor-General. He looked for support from the Whigs,......but even among that party, there were several whose claims were stronger than his.

"His resignation was a farce, for when he left India he was in fact legally out of the service, although he endeavoured to evade the law by sailing nominally for the Cape instead of to Europe direct.

"His demand for a pension higher than that of Member of Council had already been rejected, both by the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, in the most unqualified manner; nor had greater success attended his attempt to prove that the appointment of Lord Cornwallis was illegal, and that in consequence he himself was still Governor-General.

"Sir John Macpherson was elected a member of Parliament for Crickdale, which was declared void on the ground of bribery. Between 50 and 60 of his supporters had been convicted of that offence, and 82 actions had been brought against him, which he avoided by going abroad."†

* Correspondence of Cornwallis, Vol. I., p. 415.

† *Ibid.*, p. 364, footnote.

In a letter to Lord Cornwallis, dated Sackville Street, April 6, 1788, General Grant wrote that

"Sir John Macpherson has upon Petrie's prosecution been found guilty of bribery, and fined three thousand pounds, which they say at the India House renders him incapable of being a justice of the peace, and of course should operate more forcibly against his being a member of the Supreme Council. I believe his fortune is very inconsiderable, and he is said to be an expensive man."*

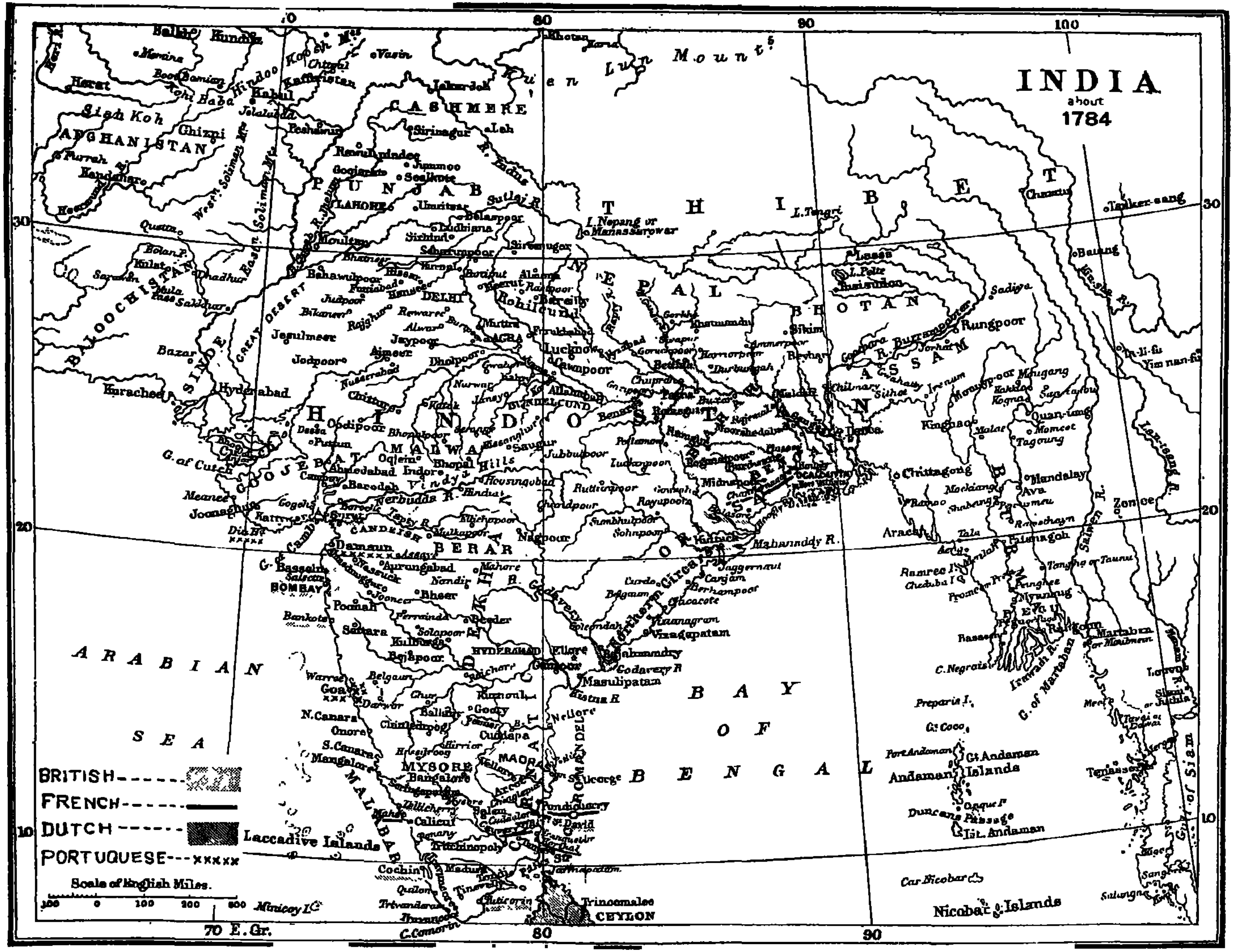
Such was the character of one who had been Governor-General of India.

Lord Macartney, the Governor of Madras, was offered that honour, but he declined it on the score of his health. After retiring from the governorship of Madras he embarked for England and reached London on the 9th January, 1786. On the 13th January he went to the India House to explain to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Company his reasons for declining the Governor-Generalship of India.

About a month afterwards, Mr. Dundas wrote to him to see the Prime Minister Mr. Pitt and himself on the 1st February at the office of the Board of Control, which he did. Mr. Pitt assured him of his support and countenance if he would go out to India as Governor-General. But Lord Macartney, who was an Irish peer, was ambitious enough to declare that he would do so if His Majesty conferred on him the British peerage. This the Minister was not prepared to recommend to His Majesty and so Lord Macartney did not accept the office offered to him.

The authorities appointed the Earl of Cornwallis Governor-General of India.

Ibid., p. 365. *



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CHAPTER XIII.

LORD CORNWALLIS' ADMINISTRATION

(1786-1793).

Lord Cornwallis hesitated to accept the Governor-Generalship of India unless additional powers were given to him which would make him an autocrat and quite independent of the opinions of the members of the Council. The Act of 1773 appointing four councillors for Fort William limited the exercise of unrestricted power of the Governor-General, for he had no greater power than his colleagues. This state of affairs did not meet with the approval of Lord Cornwallis. So he declined to accept the Governor-Generalship of India in 1782 when Lord Shelburne offered it to him. Warren Hastings' administration excited such an interest in Indian affairs in England that a select as well as secret Committee of the House of Commons was appointed and twelve reports from the former and six from the latter were issued which led to the introduction in the House of Commons, of Mr. Fox's bill on the 11th November 1783. Warren Hastings would have been thrown out of his office had this bill been passed. This bill, which seems to have been the handiwork of Sir Phillip Francis, was unfortunately not passed. Mill writes:

"No proceeding of the English Government, in modern times, has excited a greater ferment in the nation, than these two bills of Mr. Fox. An alarm diffused itself, for which the ground was extremely scanty, and for which, notwithstanding the industry and the art with which the advantage was improved by the opposite party, it is difficult, considering the usual apathy of the public on much more important occasions, entirely to account. The character of Mr. Fox, who was at that time extremely unpopular, and from the irregularity of his private habits as well as the apparent sacrifice of all principle in his coalition with Lord North, was, by a great part of the nation, regarded as a profligate gamester, both in public and private life, contributed largely to the existence of the storm, and to the apprehensions of danger from the additional power which he appeared to be taking into his hands."*

Fox's bill was not passed, but it overthrew the coalition ministry. Pitt now ascended the stage and in the next year, he introduced a bill which was passed into law on the 13th of August, 1784. By this bill was established a Board of Control which was invested with the superintendence of all the civil, military, and revenue affairs of the Company. But even this new Bill did not satisfy Lord Cornwallis. Charles Ross, who edited his correspondence, writes that

"it was not till he was assured by the Government that his objections should be obviated, that he finally consented to go to India.

"A bill was accordingly brought in (26 Geo. III. C. 16), but it did not receive the royal assent till after he had left England. By it the Governor-General and the other Governors were enabled

* History of India, iv, pp. 384-385.

in cases which they considered of emergency, to act without the assent of their Councils, and even contrary to their opinion. But dissents might be recorded in writing."*

Under such happy circumstances did Lord Cornwallis sail from England in May 1786.

It is a common dictum of the writers on Indian History that Cornwallis was one of the noblest and best Governor-Generals of India and that he loved peace more than anything else. But this view is a fallacious one. If we scrutinize the career of Cornwallis in India, we shall find that he was not a man of strong principles. We should not forget that when he was sent to India, he was as it were under a cloud. His reputation had been blasted and his name held in obloquy by the population of England. He had surrendered the American colonies to Washington and his colleagues. In the American War of Independence, Cornwallis by no means played a very creditable part. So when he came out to India, he had to retrieve his character and bid for popularity with his countrymen.

Cornwallis was by no means a great man, nor was his character above suspicion. Sir Philip Francis, as writer of the *Letters of Junius*, wrote as far back as 1770, crediting Cornwallis with the intention of 'retiring into voluntary banishment in the hope of recovering some of his reputation.' Coming to the time of the American War of Independence, we find that his reputation was utterly blasted, because of his failure to rivet the chain of slavery round the necks of the colonists of America. The King of England and his Prime Minister, Pitt, agreed to expose him to the world 'as an object of contempt and ridicule."†

However, the ministry wanted to give him a 'chance.' The ministry, at the head of which was Mr. Pitt, were crest-fallen on the loss of their American colonies. To compensate for this loss, they were dreaming of founding an Indian Empire. To realize their dream, they gave the chance to that very man who was instrumental in losing the colonies in America. So in the beginning of 1786, he was appointed Governor-General of India; he sailed in May and landed in Calcutta in September of the same year.

It is necessary here to mention that Cornwallis was a native of Ireland by nationality. The Irish question of recent times was also the burning question of the day in the time of Cornwallis. The Irish landlords were as cruel and tyrannical to their tenants as their later descendants. Their acts of tyranny and cruelty led to the depopulation of many a "Sweet Auburn" in Ireland. Evictments of tenants were of almost daily occurrence, for no love was ever lost between the Irish landlords and their tenants. The above facts, *viz.*, Cornwallis' surrender to Washington, and his being an Irishman,

* Vol. I, pp. 213-214.

† Cornwallis was a drunkard. Lecky in his *History of England* (Cabinet Edition, Vol. VII, pp. 197) writes :

"Horace Walpole describes a violent quarrel at the opera, which was due to Lord Cornwallis and Lord Allan having come in drunk and insulted Mr. Rigby in the pit."

should be borne in mind, for they help us in understanding the measures which he pursued during his administration as Governor-General of India.

When Cornwallis assumed the reins of the Indian Government, he found an empty treasury, and the portion of India under the administration of the East India Company poverty-stricken, for people had ceased cultivation and famine had rendered desolate many a smiling village and town.* If the lesser India under the British was in such a pitiful plight, the greater India under her native sovereigns was still prosperous, for internecine wars and strifes were not so destructive of men and their domestic beasts of burden and agriculture as systematic maladministration. The Greater India then was under the sovereignty of the Marathas and the Viceroys of the Deccan and Lucknow, and of Tipu Sultan. In Cornwallis' time, the name of Tipu was a name of terror to every native of Great Britain. A minister of the Christian faith has recorded that "Tipu was a sort of Eastern 'Boney': English mothers scared their naughty children with his name."†

So Cornwallis thought, when he came out to India, that he would retrieve his reputation if he could defeat Tipu. The Anglo-Indians were smarting under the humiliation which some of their countrymen had suffered at the hands of Tipu and his father Hydar. The defeats which Hydar had inflicted on the English were rankling in their breasts. Here was then an opportunity for Cornwallis to make a name and earn a niche in the temple of fame. And he eagerly seized it.

Before we describe the manner in which he violated the engagements which the British Government had solemnly entered into with Tipu, it will be necessary to refer to his transactions with the other Muhammadan States. The Mughal Emperor was still the nominal suzerain of the whole of India. The English were, in theory, his subjects and as such they were bound to pay him their tribute. But they showed their loyalty by usurping his authority. Up to the time of Warren Hastings, the British used to pay their annual tribute for holding the Dewany of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. But it is well-known how that crafty man came to an understanding with Madhava Rao Sindhia and handed over the aged Delhi Emperor to that Maratha Chief and thus discontinued paying any longer the usual dues to the Mugal Emperor. During the reign of Cornwallis, Mahadji Sindhia, as guardian of the Delhi Emperor, demanded the customary tribute from the English. But Cornwallis possessed such fine sense of justice and honour that he refused to pay it. The understanding at which the Maratha Chief had arrived with the British and which ultimately proved the ruin of the supremacy of his dynasty in India, prevented him from firmly pressing the just claim of the Mughal Emperor.

With the Nawab of Oudh, Cornwallis behaved in a manner which does not reflect much credit on his sense of justice and honor. That Muhammadan prince had been burdened with troops whose services he did not require. The maintenance of these troops led by European officers was a great drain on the resources of the Oudh Nawab,

* See pp. 24-30, *Reform Tract,* No. IX, Allahabad reprint.

† Revd. W. H. Hutton's *Marquess of Wellesley,* p. 32.

He entreated Cornwallis to withdraw the troops agreeably to the contract with Hastings. But the Governor-General turned a deaf ear to all his entreaties. In the words of the historian, Mill, Cornwallis

"described the character of the Nabob as a pure compound of negligence and profusion. And though, at that time, Oudh was threatened with no particular danger, and the expense attending the continuance of the brigade at Futtyghur exceeded the sum which he was entitled to exact of the Nabob, he adhered to the resolution that the troops should not be removed."*

Cornwallis' treatment of the Nizam does not raise his character in our estimation. On the eve of his departure from England for assuming the Government of India, Cornwallis was instructed by the Directors of the Company to demand from the Nizam the surrender of the Circar of Guntoor. Cornwallis did not demand the surrender in a straightforward manner. But he waited like the sly fox in watch for his prey. He was afraid lest his demand for the surrender of the Circar might drive the Nizam into the arms of Tipu. But when he realized how helpless the Nizam's position was, he set about demanding the surrender. For this purpose, he despatched a British officer to the Court of the Nizam. The name of this officer was Captain Kennaway. The manner in which the execution of the demand was planned, has been very graphically described by Mill. He writes:

"No intimation was to be given to the Nizam of the proposed demand, till after the arrival of Captain Kennaway at his Court * * * The Government of Madras under specious pretences, conveyed a body of troops to the neighbourhood of the Circar; and held themselves in readiness to seize the territory before any other power could interpose, either with arms or remonstrance."†

But the Nizam did not raise any serious objections to the surrender of the Circar to the British merchants. This disloyal and usurping Viceroy of the Mughal Emperor was only too eager to purchase the friendship of the English at any cost. Perfectly devoid of pride and self-respect, as well as of honesty, the Nizam had, by every possible means, succeeded in climbing the ladder rung by rung, and invariably as he had climbed he had kicked down the rungs to which he owed his elevation. So it is not to be surprised at, that without a show of resistance even, the Nizam surrendered to the British the Guntoor Circar.

Having gained what he wanted from the Nizam, Cornwallis now thought that the time had arrived to cross blades with Tipu. To go to war with that Muhammadan sovereign without any apparent cause, would have been a gross violation of the Acts of Parliament. So the Governor-General adopted measures calculated to provoke Tipu Sultan to hostilities. He did not stop to consider the righteousness of his acts. But this would have been foreign to his purpose, inclined as he was to retrieve his reputation which had been blasted by the surrender of the American Colonies to Washington. Cornwallis deliberately violated the Treaty which had been concluded with Tipu in 1784. He professed the continued existence of the old Treaty of 1768 and to satisfy the demands of his new ally, the Nizam, he limited the meaning of the clause in the Treaty which stipulated the lending of the English troops to the Nizam, by saying that

* Vol. V, p. 222.

† *Ibid.*, p. 225.

the Nizam should not employ the troops lent to him against the Company's allies, among whom were enumerated the Maratha Chiefs, the Nawabs of Oudh and Arcot, and the Rajas of Travancore and Tanjore. The name of Tipu was deliberately omitted.

Regarding this measure of Lord Cornwallis, even his great admirer, Sir John Malcolm, is obliged to write as follows:

"The desire of not offending against the letter of the Act of Parliament, would appear on this occasion to have led to a trespass on its spirit. Two treaties had been concluded subsequently to the treaty of 1768, between Haidar Ali Khan and the British Government: and the latter State had concluded a treaty of peace with his son Tippoo Sultan in 1784, by which it had fully recognised his right of sovereignty to the territories which he possessed. And assuredly under such circumstances, the revival with any modification of an offensive alliance (for such the treaty of 1768 undoubtedly was) could not but alarm that prince.

"Nor was that alarm likely to be dispelled, by that qualification in the engagement which provided that no immediate operation should be undertaken against his dominions, as the expression by which that qualification was followed, showed, that the eventual execution of those articles, which went to divest him of his territories, was not deemed an improbable, or at least an impossible occurrence, by the contracting powers. Another part of this engagement which appeared calculated to excite apprehension in the mind of Tippoo was, the stipulation which regarded the employment of the subsidiary force granted to the Nizam; which was made discretional with the exception of not acting against some specified Princes and Chiefs, among whom he was not included.

"That such ideas were entertained by Tippo, from the moment he heard of the conclusion of this engagement, there cannot be a doubt. It would, indeed, appear by a letter from the Resident at Poona that the minister of that Court, considered this engagement *as one of an offensive nature* against Tippoo Sultaun. * * * The liberal construction of the restrictions of the act of Parliament had, upon this occasion, the effect of making the Governor-General pursue a course, which was perhaps not only questionable in point of faith, but which must have been more offensive to Tippu Sultaun and more calculated to produce a war with that Prince, than the avowed contract of a defensive engagement framed for the express and legitimate purpose of limiting his inordinate ambition."*

Another officer, named Colonel Wilks, thus wrote regarding Cornwallis' conduct in in these transactions:

"It is highly instructive to observe a statesman, justly extolled for moderate and pacific dispositions, thus indirectly violating a law, enacted for the enforcement of these virtues, by entering into a very intelligible offensive alliance."†

All that could be said in favour of this treacherous conduct of Cornwallis towards Tipu, is that he found the other Powers of Southern India willing to assist him in annihilating the Mysore upstart. The Marathas and the Nizam had good reasons to be dissatisfied with the conduct of Tipu. That Muhammadan Prince was bent on pursuing a career of conquest. He did not respect the engagements he had entered into with the Marathas and the Nizam. So it was no wonder that they were turned into his bitter enemies. The wars which they had made on him and in which he was worsted, were all his doing. It is a remarkable fact that the English then did not come to the

* Malcolm's *Sketch of a Political History of India*, pp. 68-69 (of the Second Edition).

† *Historical Sketches*, iii. 38.

assistance of their allies, the Marathas and the Nizam. But with great promptness Cornwallis swooped down on Tipu when the latter, it is alleged, merely intended attacking Travancore, an ally of the ruling Company of merchants. It need hardly be added that Cornwallis would have suffered the swallowing up of Travancore and he would not have raised his little finger to save his ally the Hindu Raja of Travancore, had he not considered that defeating Tipu would retrieve his reputation and had he not also been promised assistance by the Marathas and the Nizam in attacking Tipu. It was not out of any love for the Travancore prince or any regard for the just cause of a weak ally that the Governor-General violated a solemn treaty.

Cornwallis was guilty of 'bad faith' towards Tipu and disobedience of the orders of his employers, the British Parliament. When Hydar's death occurred in 1782, the war in which he was then engaged against the English had not been concluded. Tipu had to carry on that war ; and he managed the whole affair in a manner which reflected great credit on his generalship. The English were compelled to sue for peace and had to cringe before Tipu. Regarding this, Mill writes :

"The injuries which the English had sustained, since Tippoo had joined in the business of negotiation, were such, as in a prouder state of the English mind, would have appeared to call for signal retribution. But the debility and dejection to which their countrymen were now reduced, and the despair of resources to continue the war, impressed the negotiators with a very unusual admiration of the advantages of peace ; and meeting the crafty and deceitful practices of Tippoo with temper and perseverance, they succeeded, on the 11th of March 1784, in gaining his signature to a treaty, by which, on the general condition of a mutual restitution of conquests, peace was obtained."*

By this Treaty, known as the Treaty of Mangalore, Tipu was recognised by the English as one of their allies. But Cornwallis did not treat him as such. Hence he was guilty of 'bad faith'. As said above, Tipu was made to believe that the English meant hostilities against him, because he was not mentioned as one of their allies. Again, the military preparations which were going on in the territories then under the administration of the English left no doubt in his mind, that their intentions were any thing but friendly towards him.†

Cornwallis did nothing to remove or explain away the causes of Tipu's alarm. On the contrary, he did everything calculated to make Tipu believe that the English wanted to wipe off the disgrace which he and his father had inflicted on them. They circulated wild stories regarding Tipu's cruelties and barbarities. In his wars and conquests, Tipu, like all other conquerors who preceded or have followed him, was unscrupulous as to the means which he employed in gaining his ends. But it may be doubted whether he was so cruel as his contemporary Christian rulers were. He never ill-treated his subjects. The land over which he ruled presented a scene of prosperity which was not to be met with in the British India of those days.** But Tipu was harsh, if not exactly cruel to his enemies and his European prisoners of war.

The immediate cause which led the Governor-General to declare hostilities against

* Vol. IV, p. 222.

† See Grant-Duff's *History*, p. 472.

** See p. 27, *India Reform Tracts*, No IX, Allahabad reprint.

Tipu was the allegation that the latter had been meditating an attack on the Raja of Travancore, an ally of the East India Company. It is not necessary to enter into the long-standing disputes between Tipu and the Travancore State. It is of little consequence whether Tipu was aggressive or the Travancore Raja had a grievance against the Mysore usurper. But from all accounts it appears that there was no desire on the part of Tipu to go to war with the English. As said before, Cornwallis was determined to find a pretext to make war on him. And for this purpose, he had been making every preparation since his arrival in India.* He even did not scruple to set at defiance the Act of Parliament which imposed on the British Government the necessity of not interfering with the affairs of the native states of India. The system of neutrality was required of the Indian Government. But Cornwallis, to retrieve his blasted reputation, took no notice of that Parliamentary Act. According to him, the system of neutrality had "been

* From the correspondence of Charles, first Marquis Cornwallis, edited with notes by Charles Ross, there is hardly left any ground for doubt about this point. The Marathas had been promised by the predecessor of Cornwallis an offer of aid against Tipu. A few days after his arrival at Calcutta, Lord Cornwallis in a minute wrote :

"That the offer, through our Resident at Poona, to grant an assistance of troops from Bombay to the Peshwa, proceeded from the warmest anxiety for the public good, I am firmly persuaded ; but I am clearly of opinion, that if performed, it would amount to a direct breach of the late treaty of peace with Tipu Sultaun, in the first article of which, the contracting parties engage that they will not directly 'or indirectly assist the enemies of each other ;' and it would be no less acting in defiance of the Act of 24th George III. I cannot consider the French, or any other intrigues that we know of, as in any degree approaching to the spirit of the above exception."

Yet the noble Lord, shortly afterwards, considered that it would not "amount to a direct breach of the late treaty of peace with Tippoo Sultaun" to deliberately omit his name from the list of the Company's allies ! He could not go at once to war with Tippoo, because the Company's finances did not permit him to do so. This will be evident from his letter marked 'Private' to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, dated Calcutta, March 5, 1787, in which he wrote :—"I am perfectly sensible of the importance of Tellicherry in case of a war with Tippoo, but the stationing a large force there, and the erecting considerable new works, would be necessary to give it security and importance. In the present state of our finances, nothing but the appearance of an emergency could induce me to think of either ; for the constant drain of pay for the troops, and particularly the engineer's bills for the works, would totally demolish the effects of all my labours and economy in this country."

But such was his consistency that he wrote from Futtyghur on Oct., 15, 1787 to Sir John Shore to make necessary preparations for a war with Tipu. His own words are :—"I most perfectly approve of your having resolved to support the declaration of the Madras Government and of its being our determination to protect the Rajah of Travancore as one of our allies. * * * We must no doubt make every preparation in our power to furnish supplies of men, money, or for carrying on the war (if we should be forced into it) with the greatest vigour ; * * * It is impossible to enter into particulars, until we are acquainted with the manner in which Tipu means to carry his designs into execution." That is to say, without knowing the intentions of Tipu and without giving that Prince a chance to explain the authenticity or otherwise of the rumours that had been spread regarding his alleged invasion of the Raja of Travancore's dominion, Cornwallis ordered to "make every preparation for carrying on the war." The subsequent acts of Lord Cornwallis amply prove that he was fully determined to cross blades with Tipu. He sent a British officer to Nagpore for the purpose of asking the Marathas to join him against Tipu. For this purpose, one Mr. George Forster was

attended with the unavoidable inconvenience of our being constantly exposed to the necessity of commencing a war, without having previously received the assistance of efficient allies."*

He now invited the Marathas and the Nizam to a defensive alliance against Tipu. Advantages were held out to these powers; they were told that they would share with the British Government the territorial conquests wrung from Tipu. Accordingly when this triple alliance was formed, Cornwallis thought that the time had come to declare war against Tipu. A pretext was found. It was alleged that he contemplated attacking the Raja of Travancore.

It is necessary here to state that the Government of Madras were averse to the war. Cornwallis never consulted that Government as to the propriety or necessity of going to war against Tipu. That Government was in a position to know Tipu's intentions better than Cornwallis. Mr. Holland, who was made to retire from the Governorship of Madras, declared in his last letter to Cornwallis, that Tipu "had no intention to break with the Company and would be disposed to enter into negotiation for the adjustment of the points in dispute." But Mr. Holland was superseded by General Medows, who was a fire-brand like Cornwallis himself. He proved an admirable tool in Cornwallis' hands.

Tipu himself had no intention to wage war against the English or the Raja of Travancore. Colonel Wilks writes that Tipu "was unprepared for war." Tipu himself gave assurance that his affections were pacific, and that he had no intention to invade the ancient territories of Travancore. He even went so far as to write to the Madras Government suggesting to amicably settle the matters by envoys on both sides, and asking for a safe conduct for his own ambassador. But neither Lord Cornwallis nor the newly appointed Governor of Madras, named General Medows, had the remotest

selected. Writing to his protege from Cawnpore on October 23, 1787, Lord Cornwallis directed him to proceed to the Court of Mudaji Bhonsla, the acting chief of the Berar Government, to spy out the strength &c., of that State and also to incite the Maratha chiefs to combine with Cornwallis against Tipu. At that time the Marathas were not soliciting the aid of the British against Tipu. They were almost on terms of peace with that Muhammadan Prince. Hence Cornwallis wrote :—"If the Marathas have engaged or resolved to keep peace with Tippoo, it is not probable that our solicitations would induce them to depart immediately from that plan." Mr. Forster was therefore instructed to spare no pains to incite the Marathas "to form a close connexion and alliance against Tippoo as a common enemy."

To Mr. Malet, the Resident at Poona, Lord Cornwallis wrote on March 10, 1788 :—"I look upon a rupture with Tippoo as a certain and immediate consequence of a war with France, and in that event a vigorous co-operation of the Marathas would certainly be of the utmost importance to our interests in this country."

Here the Governor-General throws off his disguise; here there is no allusion to the alleged aggression on the part of Tipu against the Raja of Travancore's territories. From perusing all these letters written by Lord Cornwallis, no one can help concluding that he had fully resolved to go to war with Tippu and was merely seeking for a pretext to make the people believe that the war was a just one.

*. *Despatch* to Mr. Malet, 28th February, 1790.

intention of living on peaceful terms with Tipu. They knew that Tipu was unprepared for war and so Cornwallis wrote to the Madras Governor that

"Good policy, as well as a regard to our reputation in this country, requires, that we should not only exact severe reparation from Tippoo, but also, that, *we should take this opportunity to reduce the power of a Prince, who avows upon every occasion so rancorous an enmity to our nation.*— At present we have every prospect of aid from the country powers, whilst he can expect no assistance from France. And if he is suffered to retain his present importance, * * until the French are again in a condition to support him, it would almost certainly leave the seeds of a future dangerous war."*

From the sentence which we have italicised above, it is clear that the war which Cornwallis declared against Tipu was an unjust and unjustifiable one. General Medows, the Governor of Madras, wrote an insulting letter to Tipu in reply to the latter's request for amicably settling the disputes between him and the British. General Medows, who professed at least to be a Christian and as such was in the habit of praying day after day for the kingdom of heaven to come on earth, or in other words, prayed that there might be peace and goodwill amongst men, was only too ready and willing to plunge the country into all the horrors of war. He did not want peace but war. Tipu offered to send a person of dignity to Madras to give and receive explanations on the subjects of dispute, and "remove the dust by which the upright mind of the General had been obscured." But the pious General wrote :

"I received yours, and understand its contents. You are a great Prince, and, but for your cruelty to your prisoners, I should add, an enlightened one. The English, equally incapable of offering an insult, as of submitting to one, have always looked upon war as declared, from the moment you attacked their ally, the king of Travancore. God does not always give the battle to the strong, nor the race to the swift, but generally success to those whose cause is just—Upon this we depend."†

In this letter the Christian General did not strike any note to peacefully settle the subjects of dispute. He insulted Tipu. How different was the conduct of the Company's servants now from that of 1784, when they cringed before Tipu to show mercy to them and submitted to be dictated to as to the terms of the Treaty of Mangalore !

The die was now cast. Tippu had not to fight the British alone, but also their allies, the Marathas and the Nizam. The Governor-General of India, Lord Cornwallis, was desirous of leading the troops in person against Tipu. But when he found General Medows nearer the seat of war, he delegated the command of troops to that officer, who, however, was no match for Tipu in generalship, for he out-manœuvred and out-generalled him. This success over the Christian General added another feather to the cap of the Muhammadan ruler of Mysore.

When affairs had taken such a gloomy turn, then Cornwallis thought it proper that he himself should take the field against Tipu. So Cornwallis, who had arrived at Madras on the 12th December, 1790, assumed personally the command of the army and directed General Medows to return to the Presidency. It need hardly be said that

* Mill, Vol. V, p. 243.

† *Ibid.*, p. 245.

with the assistance of his allies, and the large army which he had at his command, Cornwallis had no difficulty in defeating Tipu, who, as said before, was not prepared for the war. Bangalore was taken by assault and in its capture, cruelties and barbarities were, under the direction of Cornwallis, practised on the inmates of the town. Mill writes that "the fury which almost always animates soldiers in a storm, when their own safety depends upon the terror they inspire, led to a deplorable carnage."

After capturing Bangalore, Cornwallis made every preparation for the reduction of Seringapatam, which was Tipu's capital. That unfortunate Prince was all the time making overtures for peace. But his overtures met with no success. His letters were not attended to by the Governor-General, who also declined receiving an ambassador from Tipu. When Cornwallis' army was in view of Seringapatam, Tipu sent a present of fruit which the Governor-General returned untouched. Referring to this incident Colonel Wilks, the historian of the Mysore Campaign, writes :

"It will be difficult for the reader to conceive the intense delight with which, on the ensuing morning, the whole army beheld the loads of fruit untouched, and the camel unaccepted, returning to Seringapatam."

Mill truly observes that

"the fact is, that the English in India, at that time, had been worked up into a mixture of fury and rage against Tipu, more resembling the passion of savages against their enemy, * * than the feelings with which a civilized nation regards the worst of its foes.*

Even after receiving all these slights and insults, Tipu again tried to open negotiations for peace with Cornwallis. That Prince was obliged to sue for peace, because there were traitors in his camp. The treachery was the result of the short-sighted policy of his father and himself in employing European mercenaries and appointing them to all high posts of trust and honor. These mercenaries considered it meritorious to desert their master whose salt they had eaten so long, at a very critical time. Although it is not on record, there is reason to suspect that Cornwallis bought over these mercenaries. On no other supposition can we account for the readiness with which the European employees of Tipu deserted him. Thornton in his *History of British India* writes:

"A number of Europeans, principally Frenchmen, who had long served him (Tippoo) and his father, took the opportunity of quitting a service of which they were weary. Among them was a man named Blevette, whose departure was a serious loss to the Sultan, as he possesed considerable skill in fortification. * * * Tipu's European servants were now quite as ready to exercise their skill and knowledge for his destruction as they had previously been assiduous in using them for his defence."

Owing to the helpless position to which he was reduced, Tipu had to sue for peace. He sent a Vakil to Cornwallis, who consented to receive him at the warm instances of the Maratha allies. But the messenger was sent back to his master, without being permitted to enter Cornwallis' camp, because he declined to treat with an agent. At the rejection of Tipu's overture for peace, the British were delighted.†

* Vol. V, p. 278.

† See Mill's History, Vol V, p. 284.

So the war proceeded for many months longer. At last Seringapatam was besieged. Tipu again opened negotiations for peace. This time, at the intercession of his Maratha allies, Cornwallis was obliged to accede to Tipu's overtures. It was the interest of the Marathas to curb Tipu's power, but not altogether to annihilate him. At that time the Maratha affairs were being managed by that talented statesman, Nana Fadnavis. He knew how grasping the Europeans were. It was no secret to him that the English were doing everything in their power to found an empire in India. As was to be expected of him, he would not consent to extirpate Tipu altogether. It was his influence which gave a fresh lease of a few years more to Tipu's sovereignty. The intervention of the Marathas in preventing the extirpation of Tipu at this time was fortunate for the lawful Raja of Mysore. Hydar Ali was an usurper and his son Tipu was no better. Had Cornwallis succeeded in reducing Seringapatam and imprisoning or slaying Tipu, the whole of the Mysore territory would have passed into the hands of the British, for it does not appear that Cornwallis ever troubled himself about the rightful sovereign of the Mysore State, who was then a prisoner of Tipu's. There would not have then arisen that Native State of Mysore which is now looked upon as a model State in India and is held up even to the British Government of India for imitation.

After considerable discussion, the treaty of peace was signed by Tipu and Cornwallis as well as the allies. That unfortunate Prince was made to cede half the territory which he possessed before the war, to pay three crores and thirty thousand rupees, and to deliver two of his sons as hostages for the due performance of the conditions. This Treaty was signed on the 23rd February, 1792. The ceded territory was divided between the East India Company, the Marathas and the Nizam.

It was Cornwallis who could boast that for the first time, the British had obtained territory in India by conquest; for not an inch of land which they possessed in India previous to the war with Tipu had been obtained by conquest. From the time of Clive all the acquisitions of land by the East India Company in India were by means of diplomacy, fraud and usurpation. Cornwallis was the first Englishman to obtain land in India by conquest. England also came to his assistance by giving a loan of several thousands of pounds sterling to carry on the unjust war against Tipu. The English ministry gave every support in their power to Cornwallis in his aggressive policy. From all these facts, can it be doubted for a moment that they were bent on founding an empire in India to compensate for th· loss of America?

There were a few members in the British Parliament who protested against the war. Mr. Hippesly, Mr. Philip Francis and Mr. Fox, with their usual eloquence and mastery over facts, raised their voice against Cornwallis' aggressive measures. The first-named member of Parliament had called in question the justice and policy of the war, affirmed that the Raja of Travancore was the aggressor, and complained that, though the war was ostensibly undertaken on account of the alleged attack on Travancore, the Raja was not mentioned. Cornwallis' alliance with the Marathas and the Nizam was denounced by Mr. Fox as a plundering confederacy for the purpose of extirpating a lawful Prince. He said, that when the progress of civilization had rendered

men ashamed of offensive alliances in Europe, the British had signalized their virtue by reviving them in India.

But all these protests were in vain. The Ministry resolved to send out to India more regiments to assist Cornwallis and gave him a loan of £500,000 in specie. They deliberately violated the Act of Parliament which had been passed in 1784. It was their duty to scrupulously watch that their representatives in India did not infringe any of the provisions of that Act. But their conduct encouraged every Governor-General of India to treat that Act with contempt. Mill truly observes that

"Sir John Malcolm, whose loyalty offends not commonly on the score of weakness, seems to regard it as one of the principal advantages of the war, that it displayed Lord Cornwallis' contempt for the act of Parliament. 'The policy' (says that writer, *Sketch of the Political History of India*, p. 94) 'of Lord Cornwallis was neither directed to obtain a delay of hostilities, nor limited to the object of repelling the immediate danger, with which the State over whose councils he presided was threatened': That is to say, it was not confined to the express object to which he was limited by act of Parliament. When fully satisfied of the designs of Tippu, he hastened to attack him; he saw the great advantages which were likely to result from early offensive operations; and the moment he resolved on war, he contemplated (as appears from the whole tenour of his correspondence previous to the commencement of hostilities) the increase of the Company's territories in the quarters of the Carnatic and Malabar, as a desirable object of policy. The grand object, indeed, of Sir John's intelligent work, is to point out the impolicy of the restricting act of Parliament to demonstrate that the most eminent of the Indian Governors, Mr. Hastings, Lord Cornwallis, and Lord Wellesly, have treated it with uninterrupted contempt; and received applause for every successful violation of it."*

Cornwallis was guilty of waging this unjust war in violation of the declared sense and enactments of Parliament. But he did not stop to consider that. The successful termination of the war retrieved his reputation.

Cornwallis further heightened his reputation by attacking all the French possessions in India. He was ambitious of obtaining the honor of extirpating the republicans, and he succeeded in adding almost the whole of the French settlements to the English possessions. This was done in 1793 on the eve of his departure from India.

Cornwallis was hankering after military glory, because he knew that that alone would set him right in the eyes of the inhabitants of Great Britain, enraged as they had been against him for surrendering America to the rebels. It was, therefore, that he was so anxious to wage war against Tipu and extirpate the French in India.

Cornwallis as a civil ruler does not merit that admiration which writers on Indian History have bestowed on him. His governing idea in the administration of India was to have India, not for Indians, but for England. To do this effectively, he adopted means calculated to demoralize the Indian people. He succeeded in establishing the British supremacy in India. Neither Clive nor Warren Hastings went the length which Cornwallis did, in permanently excluding the children of the Indian soil from all high offices of trust and responsibility, not only in the military but in the civil government of their country.

Ibid., p. 327, f. n.

The Indian Princes were seeking the aid of trained European soldiers and officers to fight their battles. It was impossible, under the circumstances, to appoint Indians to high military posts. But Indians were well qualified to hold the high posts in the civil government of their country. The States under the rule of Indian Princes presented a scene of prosperity which one would have looked for in vain in the territories owning the rule of the British.* But Lord Cornwallis thought otherwise. He found his Christian countrymen in high offices of trust and responsibility corrupt and incompetent. The British Civil Servants of India in Cornwallis' time were a disgrace to any government. Lord Cornwallis saw this and he tried to remedy the evil in a way for which Indians should execrate his memory. In order to elevate the moral tone of his compatriots in the public services of India, he resolved firstly to enhance their salary, as if the emoluments which they were at that time in receipt of, were not adequate to the service they performed, and secondly to exclude Indians from all high offices altogether. His measures stirred up in the breasts of his countrymen in India a spirit of hatred to, and contempt for, the natives of the country, and marked the line between the two peoples which it had not been the policy of Clive or Warren Hastings to accentuate. "Power is sweet," and he tried to have a monopoly of all that power in the hands of his own countrymen, and thus to reduce the children of the soil to the condition of 'hewers of wood and drawers of water.' From the effects of Cornwallis' so-called reforms of the public services India is still suffering. No British statesman or administrator has been as yet found strong enough to completely undo the mischief which Cornwallis committed.†

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* See *Indian Reform Tracts*, Nos. IV, & IX Allahabad reprints.

† Kaye in his *Administration of the East India Company* writes :

"And as the character of the English gentlemen as administrators continued to improve, the debasement of the natives of India became more complete. During the first quarter of the present (19th) century they continued in a state of dreary stagnation. There was no awakening of the faculties—no sign of progress within or without. There was nothing surprising in this. The intelligence of the people of India had, for many years, been held in small esteem by their rulers; and they were not likely to rise much above the level which had been practicallly assigned to them by those who shaped the destinies the nation. Our system, indeed, had been one of depression. Under the administration of Lord Cornwallis * * * all the higher offices of the state had been conferred on European gentlemen—the Covenanted Civil Service of the Company. The practice thus instituted had been followed by subsequent administrators; and the official condition of the natives, in course of time, had rather deteriorated than improved. In fact, it was not only that the highest offices were conferred on the Europeans, but that none but the lowest were bestowed upon the natives. There may have been, in 1790, some wisdom in this. Perhaps it was not so much that Cornwallis and his advisers mistrusted the native, as that they mistrusted the European functionaries. Cornwallis found his higher European agency, not in the state which had roused the energies of Clive to the great work of 'cleansing the Augean stable,' but very far removed from the purity and efficiency which it has attained in the present day. He saw doubtless, that the native functionary in the hands of his European colleague, or superior, might become a very mischievous tool—a ready-made instrument of extortion—and he determined, therefore, not to mix up the two agencies so perilously together. It is probable that, at that time, many of the higher European judicial functionaries would have exerted themselves to secure the appointment of their own tools to offices immediately

He also changed the machinery for the administration of law and justice in India. His so-called judicial reforms did not do any good to this country. The people became litigious, which they were not before. The mode of administration of law and justice which he introduced, was quite foreign to the genius and taste of the people. Had he taken advantage of the existing village communities and their Panchayats, he would have done everlasting good to the people of India. But Cornwallis was determined to transplant everything European, foreign and alien, into India and thus to make India the happy hunting ground for the failures in their native country of England. Regarding these so-called judicial reforms, the historian Mill truly observes :

"For courts of law, provided for a people, among whom justice had always been distributed in the method of simple and rational inquiry, was prescribed a course of procedure, loaded with minute formalities; rendered unintelligible, tedious and expensive, by technical devices. Of the intricacy and obscurity thus intentionally created, one effect was immediately seen; that the candidates for justice could no longer plead their own causes; that no one could undertake to present a cause to the mind of the judge according to the nicety of the prescribed and intricate forms, unless he belonged to a class of men who made it their trade to remember and observe them. The necessity of an establishment of hired advocates, ... was therefore acknowledged. ... From this, one inconvenience immediately flowed; ... that the class of causes which is infinitely the most important of all, could not fail to be treated with comparative neglect, and to sustain a proportionate failure of justice."*

If the people of India have become litigious and perjury is common in Indian Courts, it is not because the Indians are naturally so, but because the circumstances which Cornwallis introduced into the country for the benefit of his co-religionists and compatriots, have demoralized Indians. Regarding the prevalence of lying and perjury in India, the late Mr. Justice Dwarkanath Mitter, an abler, more conscientious and more learned judge than whom has never sat on the Bench of any High Court of this country, wrote:

beneath them, and by throwing upon the native judges the actual duty of deciding cases in which their patrons were interested, work the mine of corruption beneath the soil, and so cover the worst abuses. The native agent in such a case never betrays his employer; so the European functionary would have been secure. It may not, therefore, I say, have been mistrust of the natives, so much as mistrust of the Europeans, which deterred Cornwallis and his advisers from mixing up the two agencies in the general administration of the country." Pp. 419—421.

Of course this is all special pleading of Kaye in defence of Cornwallis' conduct. But the defence is very poor and disingenuous. "When Lord Cornwallis was Governor of India, the Prince of Wales, then virtually king of England, for the king was "verging upon insanity," wrote to the former to displace "a black named Alie Cann," who was Chief Criminal Judge of Benares, in order that a youth named Pellegrine Treves might be appointed to that office. This Treves was the son of a notorious money-lender to whom H. R. H. owed money. (*Vide* Cornwallis' Papers). Lord Cornwallis had obliged the Prince oftentimes before in this way, but in this instance he could not do it. He replied, therefore, that Ali Ibrahim Khan, (who was the "black Ali Cann" of the Prince), though a native, was "one of the most able and respected of public servants in India," while Treves was young and inexperienced and his appointment to such an important post, of the duties of which he had no knowledge, would only create ridicule. &c."

* V. 255

"Perjury and forgery have increased to an awful extent. . . . The usual explanation of course is that the Indian is too black to be honest, as if the vices above referred to were indigenous to the soil of this country alone. One need not however go very far to ascertain the true cause of this deplorable state of things. The introduction of a judicial system altogether unsuited to the requirements of the people, the general incompetency of the judicial functionaries most of whom are totally ignorant of the manners, customs and languages of the people, and an undue haste to dispose of cases without sufficient deliberation are quite sufficient to account for it, without attributing any peculiar depravity to the national character. . . . People will forge and perjure themselves so long as they find it their interest to do so."

The well-known English Positivist Mr. S. Lobb, a late learned Principal of the Krishnaghur College, in writing to the above-named Indian Judge, said:

"Look at our miserable legal system. Can anything be conceived more thoroughly immoral than the system of Western Advocacy which we are doing our best to introduce into this country? I ask you as one conversant with these matters, are not our law-courts hot-beds of corruption, and is not the love of litigation contaminating and thoroughly perverting the national mind? Why not let the people settle their own disputes as far as possible? If we simply keep the peace and develop the wealth of the country in a quiet way, it ought to be enough."

If the people of India have become fond of litigation, and turned perjurers and forgers, it is the judicial machinery set up in this country by Cornwallis which should be blamed for these results.

Cornwallis was very inconsistent in his so-called judicial reforms. All the judicial procedures which he introduced were meant for the people, and not the government of the country. Mill writes:

"The Government had established courts of law, and appointed for them a numerous list of forms through which it required much time to pass. In their own case, however, it would, they perceived, be highly desirable to obtain speedy justice. To obtain speedy justice, they saw, it would be absolutely necessary to be exempted from technical forms. To what expedient then had they recourse? To the abolition of technical forms? No indeed! They made a particular exception of their own case. They enacted that in all suits for rent or revenue, the courts should proceed by summary process; nay, further, that in such suits the proceedings should be exempted from those fees and expenses to which other candidates for justice were appointed to submit. By a high and conspicuous act, more expressive than words, they declared that one thing was conducive, or rather essential, to justice. They established, by their legislative authority, the very reverse. On what conceivable principle, was speedy and expensive justice good for the government, and not good for the people? From which of its imaginary evils was it exempt in the case of the government, and not equally so in the case of the people?"*

It will take too much space to mention all the evil results which followed Lord Cornwallis' Judicial Reforms. Mill has devoted several closely printed pages of his excellent History to the description of the evil results of Cornwallis' so-called Judicial Reforms. The Editor of his History, Horace Hayman Wilson, who was a bureaucratic Anglo-Indian of Sir Lepel Griffin's type and as such believed that the English Government stood in the relation of Providence to the people of India, has not appended any notes of dissent to Mill's just observations.

It is very commonly asserted that anarchy was reigning supreme in India when the

* *Ibid.*, p. 866.

English acquired it. Whether that is true or not is not the question for our consideration now. But it is an historical fact that Lord Cornwallis was to blame for the anarchy in the territories which had passed under the rule of the East India Company. What does anarchy mean ? It means that the Government to which people owe their allegiance is unable to protect their lives, property and persons. It should be remembered that when Cornwallis came to rule the British possessions in India, their rule had been in existence for several decades. His so-called judicial reforms brought about a state of things to which the gloomiest periods of the pre-British history of India do not afford a parallel. We read in an official Report* which is often alluded to by all writers on Indian History, of the anarchy which prevailed in Bengal after that Province had been under British Rule for over half a century. It is stated in that report :

"That dacoity is very prevalent in Rajshaye. * * But if its extent were known, if the scenes of horror, the murders, the burnings, the excessive cruelties, which are continually perpetrated here, were properly represented to government, I am confident that some measures would be adopted to remedy the evil. Certainly there is not an individual, belonging to the government, who does not anxiously wish to save the people from robbery and massacre. *Yet the situation of the people is not sufficiently attended to. It can not be denied, that, in point of fact, there is no protection for persons or property. Such is the state of things which prevails in most of the Zillahs in Bengal.*"

In another part of the same Report, we read that Mr. Dowdeswell, the Secretary to the Government, wrote in 1809 :

"Were I to enumerate only a thousandth part of the atrocities of the dacoits, and of the consequent sufferings of the people ; and were I to soften that recital in every mode which language would permit, I should still despair of obtaining credit, solely on my own authority, for the accuracy of the narrative. . . . Robbery, rape and even murder itself, are not the worst figures in this horrid and disgusting picture. . . . Volumes might be filled with the atrocities of the dacoits, every line of which would make the blood run cold with horror."

When the British take credit for establishing order out of chaos in India, they should be reminded of the fact that at one time anarchy in India was a thing for which they were themselves almost entirely to blame.

Cornwallis has been unnecessarily praised for granting the Permanent Settlement to Bengal and some other regions, then under the British rule. But if we carefully study the subject in all its bearings, we shall find that Lord Conwallis is hardly entitled to any credit for this measure.† He was an Irish man. The eviction of tenants was

* The celebrated Fifth Report of 1812.

† Kaye in his chapter on the Permanent Settlement of Bengal in *"The Administration of the East India Company"* wrote :

1. "That the Revenue System, which we found in operation on the assumption of the Dewanee, was not conductive to the happiness of the people.

2. "That our initial experiments of brief leases and fluctuating assessments were advantageous neither to the Government nor to the people.

3. "That all the ablest revenue-officers in the country were in favour of a Zamindaree Settlement, and that the Court of Directors held the same opinion.

Lord Cornwallis

Sir David Baird

Sir John Shore

an almost every-day occurrence in his own country. When the British established their direct rule over the territories granted to them in Dewany by the Emperor of Delhi, they assessed the land so heavily, that, to quote the words of Burke, "the country had turned into a desert," and the assessments materially contributed to the fatal consequences of the Great Famine of Bengal of 1770. The British in Bengal, like their prototypes of Peru and Mexico, were bent on amassing wealth and growing rich in as short a time as possible. No one observed these fearful things more accurately than Phillip Francis, the redoubtable opponent of Warren Hastings. It was with him that the idea of the Permanent Settlement of land revenues first originated.* His idea did not find favour with those who then governed India. But when Cornwallis came to India, he found an empty treasury, the best of the land grown waste and out of cultivation. This miserable state of things loudly called for some remedy. And the remedy which he found, had already been proposed by Sir Phillip Francis, and he and the Court of Directors eagerly adopted it. Mill truly observes :

"The fate of Mr. Francis, and of Mr. Francis's ideas, formed a contrast. He himself had been treated by the powers which were, with anything rather than respect. But his plan of finance was adopted with blind enthusiasm, with a sort of mechanical and irresistible impulse."†

In the early days of the British rule in Bengal, no European, possessing greater sympathy with the suffering population of that Province, visited India than Francis. It is to him that India is indebted for bringing about the impeachment of Warren Hastings. He exposed the misdeeds of his countrymen in India and contributed materially to putting a stop to their vagaries in this country.

It is necessary here to observe that Lord Cornwallis did not introduce Permanent Settlement out of any philanthropic motives, but to replenish the exhausted treasury of the East India Company. All those Muhammadan rulers who understood and reformed the Revenue System of India always employed Hindus as their Revenue officers. But, as said before, he excluded the natives of the country from all high offices. In one of his letters to the Court of Directors, Lord Cornwallis declared himself in the following words, which express his contempt for Indians in unmistakable language :

"I conceive that all reform would be nugatory, whilst the execution of them depends upon any native whatever."

4. "That these officers had been for a great number of years collecting information whereupon to base this settlement—and that the Court of Directors were of opinion that sufficient information had been collected.

5. "That Lord Cornwallis came out to India instructed to complete this Settlement—*that he was not, in any way, the author or originator of it*—and that he sought for further information before carrying it into effect." P. 200.

* In a minute of 1776, Phillip Francis wrote :

" The Jumma [assessment] once fixed, must be a matter of public record. It must be permanent and unalterable ; and the people must, if possible, be convinced that it is so. This condition must be fixed to the lands themselves, independent of any consideration of who may be the immediate or future proprietors. If there be any hidden wealth still existing, it will then be brought forth and employed in improving the land, because the proprietor will be satisfied that he is labouring for himself."

† V. 382. *f. n.*

In a private letter to Mr. Dundas, dated Patna, Aug. 14, 1787, Lord Cornwallis wrote :—"Every native of Hindustan is (I really believe) corrupt."

The fact should not be lost sight of that, when Cornwallis granted Permanent Settlement to Bengal, * the assessments were very heavy, and the landlords were not able to keep pace with the inflexible demand, which resulted in a widespread default. Lord Cornwallis' law enforced a sale of the estate directly the owner was in arrears, and thus large numbers of estates were put up to sale. An Anglo-Indian writer says:

"It is scarcely too much to say that within ten years that immediately followed the Permanent Settlement, a complete revolution took place in the constitution and ownership of the estates which formed the subject of that Settlement"†

Where were the beneficial intentions of Lord Cornwallis towards the Zamindars, when he introduced the 'Sale Law' with the object of reducing the size of the Zamindaries ?

We have now done with the seven years' administration of Indian affairs by Lord Cornwallis. He came out to India in 1786 and left it in 1793. His services were so valuable to the British merchants, that he not only retrieved his blasted reputation but earned a step in the peerage. He was an Earl when he was sent out to India, but when he returned to England, he was created a Marquis. Because he carried out the wishes of the Ministry, he was sent out for a second time to India, where he died. His second administration lasted only for a few months and it neither added to, nor marred his reputation.

Cornwallis should be looked upon as the first Britisher who established the British supremacy in India. The consideration of the following points will make clear the proposition :

1. He confirmed the usurpation of Bengal, Behar and Orissa granted in Dewany by the Mughal Emperor of Delhi, by finally refusing to pay the tribute. It is true that Warren Hastings withheld the payment, but it does not appear that the Mughal Emperor or his custodian Mahadji Sindhia was ever given to understand that the East India Company would never carry out their contract as to the payment of the tribute. From the frequency with which the tribute was demanded, it would seem that the Maratha Chief who acted as the Finance Minister of the Mughal Emperor expected its payment from the Company. But Cornwallis made every one clearly understand that the Company would never again pay the tribute to the Delhi Emperor.

2. He was the first Governor-General to add territories to the Company's dominions by means of conquest. Neither Clive nor Warren Hastings obtained an inch of land in India by conquest. Clive did not fight at Plassey in the name of the East India Company and his victory did not make that Company the *de jure* rulers of Bengal.

* See the *Modern Review* for August 1907, "Why Permanent Settlement was given to Bengal."

† Mr. J. Macneile's *Memorandum on the Revenue Administration of the Lower Provinces Bengal*, p. 9.

Again, to carry on his conquests, Cornwallis was assisted with men and money by the English Ministry of the day, which Clive was not.

3. Cornwallis showed the weakness of the French settlements in India by the ease with which he captured them and almost expelled the French from India.

4. Cornwallis reduced the natives of the country to the position of 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' by excluding them from all high offices of trust and responsibility. None of his predecessors even ventured to adopt those drastic measures for the exclusion of Indians from the public services of their country which Cornwallis did.

5. His so-called judicial reforms created anarchy in the country and sowed dissensions and mutual jealousies among the natives of India and ground them down to poverty. To call Cornwallis a man of 'stern rectitude', or 'of high principles' or 'of pacific intentions,' is one of those fallacies with which unfortunately the pages of Indian history written by the English abound. He has found favour with the educated gentlemen of India for his having granted the boon of 'Permanent Settlement' to Bengal and some other parts of India. But as said above, the idea was not his. He was merely masquerading, like the ugly crow in one of Æsop's Fables, with the borrowed feathers of the peacock. Remove all those gaudy feathers which are borrowed and not his own and the creature will be laid bare in all his ugliness. It is a strange irony of fate that Sir Phillip Francis, who, as writer of the Letters of Junius, credited Cornwallis with the intention of 'retiring into voluntary banishment in the hope of recovering some of his reputation', should have been deprived of his just meed of praise and reward, and almost forgotten, while the person whom he hated is admired in his borrowed garb by the Indian population.

CHAPTER XIV

SIR JOHN SHORE'S ADMINISTRATION
(1793-1798 A.D.).

In 1793 A.D., a fresh charter was granted by Parliament to the East India Company, by which it received a lease of life for another twenty years. In this charter was inserted the clause,

"To pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of this nation," &c.

It is well-known that this clause was inserted by the exertions of Sir Phillip Francis.

Pitt, who was the Prime Minister of England at this time, was no little Englander. But at that time it was not expedient to pursue schemes of conquest in India; for there was the fear of the wave of the French Revolution approaching the shores of England. Edmund Burke was bribed by a pension of £1,500 a year to produce his celebrated diatribe against the French Revolution. At this juncture, the English Ministry thought it expedient to show to the world their pacific intentions by inserting the above-mentioned clause in the charter granted to the East India Company. But if avowedly any scheme of territorial conquest in India was repugnant to the people of England, starving Indians by ruining their trade and industries was considered to be a meritorious act by the inhabitants of that island. Peter Auber writes :—

"It is only necessary to allude to so much of the commercial part of the question as was connected with the products and manufactures of India. The same opposition to the reception of those products and manufactures into this country was then urged as has since been frequently advanced. The objection rested on the ground that it would interfere either with the national or with particular interests that had peculiar claims to the protection of Parliament. The manufacturers of Manchester and Glasgow, engaged in the cotton trade, had made strong representations, in 1788, against the importation of piece-goods from India. Those representations were again put forward in 1793..............It was suggested to the Minister to prohibit, by a clause in the new Act, the export to or use of cotton machinery in India."*

Of course, the Minister could not accede to the request of the merchants with any show of decency or decorum. But it was a broad hint to those in power in India to give effect to the desire of their co-religionists and compatriots of Glasgow and Manchester. We are inclined to think that it was in this spirit that Lord Cornwallis was prompted to frame that regulation which excluded Indians from all offices of trust and responsibility in the public services of their own country. To show their pacific intentions, the authorities had to select a person for the office of Governor-General who possessed the reputation of being sanctimonious in appearance and a lover of peace. Their choice fell on John Shore.

* *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India*, London 1837, Vol. II., p: 136.

This servant of the East India Company was at that time in England with no intention of returning to India. Shore's rise in the service was due to the interest which Warren Hastings had taken in him. The despoiler of the Begums of Oude, the instrument of the judicial murder of Nand Kumar, showed such regard for Shore that he dedicated to him the English translation which he had made of that well-known Ode of Horace in which the Roman poet expressed his indifference to pomp and power and worldly riches.

It is recorded that Shore was reluctant to accept the office offered to him but he was made to do so by the earnest request of Charles Grant and Wilberforce.

The announcement of the appointment of Shore evoked strong objection from Burke, who addressed a letter to Sir Francis Baring and J. S. Burgess, Chairman and Deputy Chairman respectively of the Company, urging the propriety of postponing the appointment till the judgment on the trial and impeachment of Warren Hastings had been pronounced.* But they did not act on Burke's advice.

On being appointed Governor-General of India, Shore was made a Baronet and so became dignified as Sir John Shore. He arrived in Calcutta on the 28th October, 1793 and took up the duties of his office immediately.

* The letter which Edmund Burke addressed to Francis Baring from Bath, on October 14, 1792, is so important, that it is transcribed in full here. He wrote:

"Sir, I have heard and the account is generally credited—that Mr. Shore is in nomination, or actually appointed, to the office of the Governor-General of Bengal.

"Having been appointed by the House of Commons, a Member of Commons, to impeach one of your late Governor-Generals, Mr. Hastings, I think it my duty to inform you, that, in the exercise of the function imposed on that Committee by the House, we have found Mr. Shore materially concerned as a principal actor and party in certain of the offences charged upon Mr. Hastings; that is to say, in the mal-administration of the Revenue Board, of which, under Mr. Hastings, he was, for some considerable time, the acting Chief.

"I think it necessary to inform you, that some of the matters charged as misdemeanours, in which it appears that Mr. Shore was concerned, are actually on evidence before the Lords.

"Other facts, of a very strong nature, which the Managers for the Commons have opened as offences, are upon your Records; copies of which are in our possession. They go seriously to affect Mr. Shore's Administration, as acting Chief in the Revenue Board.

"The Committee of Managers cannot, consistently with their duty in making good the charge, confided to them by the House of Commons, avoid a proceeding in those matters, and the taking such steps, both for supporting the evidence now before the Peers, as well as putting the other and not less important matters into such a proper course of proceeding as the ends of justice and the public policy may require. They have not hitherto, in any instance, deviated from the line of their duty.

"In that situation, it is for the prudence of the Court to consider the consequences which possibly may follow from sending out, in offices of the highest rank and of the highest possible power, persons whose conduct, appearing on their own Records, is, at the first view, very reprehensible; and against whom such criminal matter, on such grounds, in a manner so solemn, and by men acting under such authority as that of the House of Commons, is partly at issue, and the rest opened and offered in proof before the highest Tribunal in the nation." (*Life of Lord Teignmouth*, Vol, I, pp. 226-228).

"Mr. Burke addressed yet stronger remonstrances to Mr. Dundas." (*Ibid.*, p. 230).

A month before his arrival in Bengal, the titular ruler of that province, the descendant of the traitor Mir Jaffar, known as Nawab Mubarek-ud-Dowla, died at the age of thirty-seven and after a reign of twenty-three years. He left behind him twelve sons and thirteen daughters. His eldest son, Uzir-ud-Dowla, was raised to the *Masnad* of Murshidabad and was solemnly proclaimed at Calcutta on the 28th September, 1793.

When Shore assumed the reins of Government, no war cloud was visible on the horizon of India. Tipu had been humbled and neither the weak and timid Nizam nor any of the powerful Maratha confederates had any desire to cross blades with the English. He, therefore, turned his attention to the improvement of Calcutta, by the appointment of the justices of the peace, who "were empowered to take measures to improve the police of Calcutta, and its internal management, also for cleansing the streets, controlling sale of spirituous liquors, and other matters, which contributed to the welfare of the community."*

Unfortunately for the Maratha people at this period died Mahadji Sindhia at Wanowrie, in the environs of Puna, on the 12th February, 1794. He was succeeded by Daulat Rao, who was a son of one of his nephews. He was in his fifteenth year when he became master of the vast territory of Mahadji, and more active and ambitious than the chief whom he succeeded. It was mostly by his exertions that the different Maratha chiefs combined in a confederacy to give battle to the Nizam.

The Marathas had accounts to settle with Nizam Ali which he evaded and when pressed to do so by the envoy of the Peshwa, Govind Rao Kale,

> "He produced a detailed statement showing a balance in his favour of nearly two crores and sixty lakhs. Warm discussions took place between the envoy and Musheer-ool-Moolk, when at last the former was told, in public durbar, that Nana Furnavees must himself attend at the Court of Hyderabad, in order to afford an explanation of the different items of their intricate claims. The envoy replied—'Nana Furnavees is much engaged; how can he come?' 'How can he come?' re-echoed Musheer-ool-Moolk—'I will soon show how he shall be *brought* to the presence. This menace was considered a sufficient declaration, and. . . . . both parties prepared to decide their differences by the sword.'†

War was now inevitable. The timid, degenerate and treacherous Muhammadan ruler of the Deccan counted on the support of the English. But this was denied to him by Sir John Shore on the ground of neutrality. Writes Sir John Malcolm, in his Political History of India :

> "There indeed appears every ground to conclude, that while the impressions which had been made on all the native powers of India, by the wise counsels and military success of the Marquess Cornwallis, were yet in full force, the decided interference of the British Government would have deterred both the Mahrattas and Tippoo Sultan from an attack upon the Nizam."

However, this was not to be. In the war that ensued, at first advantage seemed to lie with the Nizam. But in March 1795, fortune seemed to desert the Muhammadan prince, who shut himself in the fort at Kardla, where he surrendered himself to the

* Auber, Vol. II, p. 140.

† Grant Duff's Marathas, vol. i., pp. 513-514. Times of India edition, 1878.

Marathas on the morning of the 15th March. He accepted the humiliating terms imposed on him by his "infidel" conquerors.

The Peshwa Madho Rao, in whose reign took place the above-mentioned events, did not survive long the glorious victory of Kardla. With his death commenced the decline of the Maratha power.

In a previous chapter (VIII) we have given an account of the Rise of the Maratha power till the first Maratha War, which took place in Warren Hastings' time. It is necessary to narrate the course of events of Maratha History which took place after that war as far as they are connected with the Rise of the Christian Power in India.

As already stated before, it was through the mediation of Mahadji Sindhia, who was the most powerful member of the Maratha Confederacy, that the treaty of peace between the English and the Marathas was concluded after the first Maratha War. But unfortunately, he was no far-seeing statesman and so fell into the snares of the Europeans and his successor had to pay the penalty for it. He allowed himself to be embraced by the Europeans—an embrace which resembled that of the pythons or boa constrictors which reduce the objects of their embrace to such a condition as to enable them to ultimately swallow them up easily.

Warren Hastings entered into secret treaties and understandings with him. One of the charges preferred against the first British Governor-General of India by the managers of his impeachment in England was:

"That in contradiction to the safe, just, and honourable policy of the Court of Directors, which, whilst it forbade their Government engaging in any measure for the extension of the authority of Shah Alam, enjoined that he should be treated with friendship, good faith, and respectful attention, Warren Hastings did unite with the Captain-General of the Mahratta State, called Madhojee Scindhia, in designs against the few remaining territories of the Moghul Emperor ; and that whilst he sent an agent to Delhi, and carried on intrigues with the King and his ministers, tending to involve the Company in renewed hostilities, he did all along concur with the Mahrattas in their designs against the said king and his ministers, under the treacherous pretext of supporting the authority of the former against the latter, and did contrive and effect the ruin of them all, having in view one only object, the aggrandisement of the lately hostile, and always dangerous, power of the Mahrattas, which he pursued by means highly dishonourable to the British character for honour, justice, candour, plain-dealing, moderation and humanity."

Unfortunately, this charge was not proceeded with. Otherwise, many facts and circumstances would have come to light which, for historical purposes, would have been of great importance. But this much is certain, that in intriguing with the bastard chief Mahadji the British Governor-General was not prompted by any desire to contrive the aggrandisement of the dangerous power of the Marathas. That crafty ruler's policy was to make the Maratha chief his cat's paw, a tool in his hands for ruining the Marathas on the one hand and reducing the Mughal Emperor to a non-entity, on the other. He succeeded admirably, in all his designs. That bastard Maratha chief did not understand how he was made use of as a tool by Warren Hastings. That Governor-General encouraged him to employ European officers for his army. It was on his recommendation that Mahadji engaged the services of De Boigne in disciplining his troops on the model of the States of Europe. When some of the

members of the Council of Warren Hastings pointed out the danger to the territories in the possession of the English from the novel departure adopted by Mahadji in the training of his troops, it is on record that that Governor-General answered by saying that, there was no ground for being alarmed by Mahadji's procedure, since his new method of training his troops would ultimately prove his ruin. And he was a true prophet. Within his life-time he had the satisfaction of seeing his prophecy fulfilled. Warren Hastings brought on the disintegration of the Maratha Confederacy, since Mahadji considered himself superior to the other Maratha States, as he possessed troops disciplined by European officers. Naturally, jealousy was created among the Maratha confederates. The apple of discord was thrown among them.

With the help of his disciplined troops, Mahadji Sindhia entered on a career of conquest. He imprisoned the Mughal Emperor. This was exactly what suited the interests of the English in India. They never moved their little finger to come to the Emperor's rescue. They did not remonstrate with Mahadji. Warren Hastings had encouraged him to do so. The British up to this time were the subjects of the Mughal Emperer. They used to pay him their usual tribute. Now they proved their disloyalty and treason by withholding the payment of their tribute and betraying their Indian Sovereign into the hands of the bastard Maratha Chief. All these proceedings of Mahadji helped the British in consolidating their power in India.

The dominions of Holkar had for its ruler, a lady of great moral worth and abilities. Her name was Ahalya Bai. She was a widow. Although she was not an 'educated' woman, natural intelligence and strong common sense, combined with the inspiration from above felt by those who lead virtuous and pious lives, made the people she ruled the most happy and prosperous of all mankind. But with her death, a change came over Holkar's dominions. Her successor was Tukaji Holkar. He did not possess the abilities or moral greatness of Ahalya Bai. He was jealous of the growing power of Mahadji Sindhia and his conquests in Hindustan. For the first time in the history of the Marathas one of the Maratha States went to war with another. The confederates had become demoralized; internal dissensions among them had set in. Shivaji and his guru, Ramdas, lived and died to unite all who were Marathas.

"The history of the Mahrattas," writes Mr. Justice Ranade, "is a history of Confederated States. ** When the idea ceased to be respected, the Confederacy proved a source of weakness rather than strength."

This civil war between Sindhia and Holkar greatly weakened and disintegrated the Confederacy. Holkar was defeated by the disciplined troops of Sindhia under De Boigne, but he

"consoled himself for his defeat by harrying the country and sacking Scindhia's chief town Ujjain. From henceforth Holkar was a thorn in the side; and the feud was to be inherited, as one Scindhia was succeeded by another, in the succession of a new and still more formidable Holkar."*

Holkar also employed European officers for the purpose of disciplining his troops on the model of the States of Europe.

Keene's Madhava Rao Sindhia, p. 17?.

Jaswant Rao Holkar

Begum Samru

Mahadji Sindhia

Maharani Ahalyabai

The Bhonsle family of Nagpur had been detached, as stated before, from the Maratha Confederacy and won over by the English. This shortsighted policy of the Bhonsles proved suicidal to them. The Gaekwar of Baroda also had ceased to take any active interest in the affairs of the Confederacy.

Thus, the four great limbs of the Maratha Empire appeared as if they had no concern with the Central Trunk. They had not as yet been quite detached from, but were hanging loosely with, the trunk. The central trunk consequently appeared to be quite weak and helpless. The Peshwa's authority existed only in name. Since the conclusion of the peace with the British, the Puna government had been subjected to various vicissitudes of existence. By that Treaty known as the Treaty of Salbye, Raghunath Rao, who was the cause of the war, was not recognized as the Peshwa. It was thus that the Peshwa's Government gained a few years' lease of independent existence. Madho Rao Narain remained the Peshwa, with Nana Fadnavis as his Prime Minister. Raghoba was given an asylum at Kopergaon, on the banks of the Godavery, where he died in the beginning of the year 1784. It would have been a good thing for the Maratha Empire, had the descendants of Raghoba been incarcerated for life or disposed of in some other way. It should have been recognized as a maxim for the welfare of the Maratha Empire, that no descendant of a murderer had any claim to the Peshwa's *Masnad*. Only in this way would the stability of the Maratha Empire have been insured. Baji Rao, the son of Raghunath Rao, who at the time of the death of his father was about nine years old, was surrounded by a band of intriguers who conspired to depose Madho Rao Narain and elevate him to the Peshwa's *Masnad*. It is suspected that Mahadji Sindhia was the secret fomentor of the intrigues. It is probable that that chief, intoxicated with his success in Hindustan, for now he had, with the help of the British, succeeded in making the Emperor of Delhi a prisoner, desired to be the dictator of the Maratha Empire, by having a creature of his own as the Peshwa. But happily for the Marathas, the ever vigilant Nana Fadnavis nipped the conspiracy in the bud. We would have given the Nana greater credit, had he at the same time removed from Maharasthra, or disposed of, Baji Rao and thus prevented all the intrigues and future complications which ultimately proved the ruin of the Maratha Power in India.

Sindhia, as guardian of the Mughal Emperor, made a demand on the English for the tribute they had agreed to pay to the Emperor. The English refused to pay it. Had Mahadji been true to himself and loyal to the Emperor, he would have invaded the territories of the British and exacted the just demand. But he tamely submitted to the refusal.

The English were now fully determined to reduce the power of Sindhia. Grant Duff in his history of the Marathas writes :

"Mr. Macpherson conceived that the ambitious nature of Scindhia's policy was very dangerous and endeavoured to raise some counterpoise to his progress by exciting the jealousy and rivalry already entertained towards him among the other Mahratta Chiefs. Moodajee Bhonslay being at Poona * * * the Bombay Government, by Mr. Macpherson's desire, paid him extraordinary attention, which had the effect of gratifying Moodajee and alarming Scindhia." *

*History of the Marathas, 3rd edition, p. 463.

Since the death of the notorious Mr. Mostyn, no English Envoy had been sent to the Peshwa's Court. It was found necessary to send another British Envoy to create confusion and disorder in the Maratha Empire. So long internal dissensions had not broken out among the members of the Maratha Confederacy. It was politically expedient for the English that the Marathas should quarrel among themselves and thus become weakened. To secure this end, a British Envoy was sent to Puna. His name was Charles Malet. He was to pursue the line of policy chalked out by Mostyn. As events subsequent to his arrival at Puna show, he succeeded admirably and is entitled to the gratitude of his countrymen. The quarrel between the clans of Sindhia and Holkar seems to have been fomented by the British Envoy at Puna. Of course, in a matter like this, none but a man of child-like simplicity would expect documentary or legal evidence to prove the point. We are quite justified to believe that the Holkars were played off against the Sindhias by the British, from the fact that the acting Governor-General of India was anxious to raise some Maratha Chief as a counterpoise to the dangerous nature of the ambition of Mahadji Sindhia. Contemporary records do not disclose any hostile feelings entertained by Mahadji Sindhia against Holkar. On the other hand, if we are to believe the testimony of Grant Duff, in 1790 Sindhia's

"immediate views were directed to conciliate Holkar and Ali Bahadur, with the hope of obtaining their assistance in checking the incursions of the Sikhs; in humbling the Rajpoots, who continued in opposition to his authority; and in securing the dependence of Ismael Beg."*

But Holkar did not care to have friendly relations with Sindhia. As stated before, he even went to war with Mahadji and when defeated, did not scruple to sack Ujjain. These dissensions must have been fomented by the English.

Mahadji Sindhia was such an object of jealousy and terror to the British, that even Lord Cornwallis would not have anything to do with him. When that Governor-General was conspiring to attack Tipu he did not include Mahadji as an ally against that Muhammadan Prince. Indeed, it is on record that Lord Cornwallis somewhat ungraciously declined Sindhia's proffered assistance, since his power and influence were always regarded with jealousy. It did not take Mahadji long to understand the policy of the English Governors-General. He was naturally indignant at the treatment which he had been receiving at their hands. In a secret letter, dated Fort William, March 4, 1787, Lord Cornwallis wrote to the Secret Committee :

"From my letter to Captain Kirkpatrick, dated the 1st instant, you will observe that of late he has met with some slights and inattentions from India, to which as appearing to him to be an intended disrespect to the Government, he thought it improper to submit without some remonstrance."

It was then too late for Mahadji to understand the true nature of the policy of the British towards him. He had, in an evil moment, allowed himself to be embraced by them and had now to suffer the consequences of that fatal embrace. His English biographer, Mr. Keene, says that

"he (Madhoji) had twice disclaimed with almost abject apology all intention of demanding from the

* *Ibid.*, p. 490.

British Government payment of tribute, which was indeed due on the twofold ground of constitutional usage and actual treaty-obligation."

Mahadji should have attacked the territories then under the rule of the English and thus obliged them to pay the tribute. But it seems to us that he was prevented from so doing for the following reasons. As stated before, the English had raised a counterpoise to his growing power by playing off Holkar and the Bhonsles against him. Holkar, as said before, had unjustly and wantonly attacked Mahadji and when defeated sacked Ujjain.

Then again, Mahadji had committed a great mistake in appointing Europeans to raise and discipline his troops. The Commander-in-Chief of his force was a European whom Warren Hastings had raised to eminence and thus in other words De Boigne was the creature of the first Governor-General of India. It would have been idle to expect that De Boigne would have ever obeyed Mahadji and fought his co-religionists, if not his compatriots. Even, it is related that that General on the eve of his departure from India, advised the successor of Madhoji,

"never to quarrel with the British, and rather disband all his new-model men than engage them in a conflict with that power."

Having such a traitor in his camp, how bitterly Mahadji must have cursed the day when he had played false to the Maratha Confederacy by hugging the British to his breast. The words of Nana Fadnavis, with the ring of prophecy in them, must have come to his mind and reproached him for his conduct. Nana had declared to Mahadji :

"The English must not obtain a footing in the Empire ; if they obtain a footing in the Empire, the whole country will be in danger."

It would seem that Mahadji determined to undo the mischief he had committed. If there was any one throughout the length and breadth of India who had fully gauged the intentions of the English in India, it was undoubtedly Nana Fadnavis. It was therefore to Puna that Mahadji repaired for advice and to try to put his idea into execution. There is much truth in the conjecture of Colonel Malleson when he writes that Mahadji's going to Puna was actuated by a desire to "attain what had been the "dream of his later years. . . . . .to form one vast combination against the English." But it was too late now to get rid of the poison which had entered the very heart of the Maratha Empire. A British envoy had for several years past been busily engaged at Puna in the nefarious task of plotting and intriguing against Sindhia. For such was the mission with which Charles Malet was sent to Puna by the Governor-General of India. One false step taken by Mahadji led to the ruin of the Maratha supremacy in India. His mediation for peace was the greatest mistake he committed in his life.

Nana Fadnavis was not a *persona grata* with the British. The envoy at Puna, named Charles Malet, wrote :

"As long as Nana remained supreme at the Poona Court they (the British) should never dream of obtaining a firm footing in the Mahratta Kingdom."

So in the Maharashtra, there were two tall poppies whom it was the interest of the British to destroy. Mahadji and Nana were now both at Puna where Charles Malet

had been sent with distinct instructions to ruin Sindhia. It is a curious fact that Holkar attacked Sindhia's territories and when defeated, sacked Ujjain during the absence of Mahadji in Puna. There are no records existing to prove if Holkar had been instigated to do this by the British. But in the absence of any act of aggression on the part of Sindhia, against Holkar, there should be no surprise if it were the truth that Holkar had been prompted and assisted by the British in attacking Sindhia's dominion.

Mahadji Sindhia died at Wanowdi in the environs of Puna, on the 12th February 1794.* Grant Duff attributes the cause of his death to 'a violent fever', with which he had been suddenly seized. But the English biographer of Mahadji, Mr. Keene, on the authority of the *Tarikh-i-Muzafari*, states that Mahadji

"had been waylaid the evening before by an armed gang employed for the purpose by the Nana—who had certainly good reason to wish for his removal."

The English also 'had certainly good reason to wish for his removal.' If it be true that Mahadji met with a violent death, is it not reasonable to suppose that the English, especially their Envoy at Puna, conspired with Nana against Mahadji and waylaid him ?†

Anyhow, one tall poppy was now gone. But the other tall poppy was still there, whom it was not so easy to get rid of. By the death of Mahadji, Nana Fadnavis became more powerful than ever in the Maharashtra. If Mahadji was a thorn in the side of the British, the Nana was equally so. There were only two events which would have favoured the cause of the British :—either, the Nana's death, imprisonment, or disgrace; or a change in the Peshwaship. Although the English had been since a very long time plotting against Nana Fadnavis, they had not yet succeeded in injuring him. Moreover, they were greatly alarmed at the increase of Nana's power by the death of Sindhia.

Fortunately, for the British, the death of the Peshwa Madho Rao II occurred on October 27, 1795, which greatly smoothed the way in their dealings

* The writer had an occasion to see the site where Mahadji breathed his last. The village of Wanowdi is about a couple of miles distant from the Puna Cantonment. The mausoleum which Daulat Rao Sindhia intended to raise on the spot where Mahadji died had not then (1900) been completed. The vicissitudes to which the Deccan has been subjected during the last one hundred years had stood in the way of finishing a building of great historical importance.

† That Mahadji was regarded with jealousy by the English is borne testimony to by Grant Duff. He writes :—"But although nothing decidedly inimical appears on the part of Scindhia towards the British Government, his power and ambition, his march to Poona, and above all, the general opinion of the country, led the English to suspect him; and we accordingly find in their records various proofs of watchful jealousy;..........................There appeared,—soon after Scindhia's arrival in the Deccan, in an *Ukhbar*, or native newspaper, from Delhi, a paragraph, which stated that the Emperor had written to the Peishwa and Mahadajee Scindhia, expressing a hope that, by the exertions of the wukeell-i-moolluq and his deputy, he should obtain some tribute from Bengal." (P. 504).

Thus it is evident that Sindhia was no longer in the good graces of the British. Even Lord Cornwallis wished to go to war with him. In his letter to Major Palmer, Resident at the Court of Sindhia, Lord Cornwallis, writing on August 26, 1789, said :—"The particular circumstance of Sindhia's having become a principal on the side of the Mahrattas in the late treaty of Peace, and the long connection which has now subsisted between him and this Government, has hitherto rendered

with the Marathas. It was an event which was quite welcome to them, since it was calculated to create disorder and confusion in the Maratha Empire, for a change in the Peshwaship was inseparably associated with intrigues and party feelings. Thus there was a chance of Nana Fadnavis not wielding the same paramount power which he was exercising at that moment. It is stated that the Peshwa

"on the morning of the 25th October deliberately threw himself from a terrace in his palace, fractured two of his limbs, and was much wounded by the tube of a fountain on which he fell. He survived for two days." (Grant Duff. p. 521.)

There a-e two objections to the acceptance of the theory that the Peshwa committed suicide in the manner described above. In the first place, there does not appear any motive which prompted the Peshwa to commit suicide. Grant Duff writes : *

"At the Dussera, which happened on the 22nd October, and was conducted with great splendour he appeared amongst his troops, and in the evening received his chiefs and the ambassadors at his Court in his accustomed manner; but his spirit was wounded to desperation, a fixed melancholy seized on his mind."

This does not appear to have been a sufficient motive for suicide. The Peshwa would not have appeared amongst his troops, had he been seized with "a fixed melancholy." It is stated that the strictness of his cousin Baji Rao's confinement by Nana Fadnavis was not approved of by him and he was therefore "overwhelmed with anger, disappointment and grief." It should be remembered that Madho Rao had given a *carte blanche* to the Nana in the management of all state affairs. Moreover, it does not appear that he had ever remonstrated with the Nana against the confinement of his cousin Baji Rao. There is no shred of evidence to show that the Nana would

it expedient to station a Resident with him, though I must confess that it is somewhat problematical, whether the measure is necessary or advantageous to the Company.

"From the authority which seems to have been delegated by the Peshwa's Government to Ali Bahadar and Tunkojee Holkar to interfere with Scindhia in the management of the Mahratta interests in Hindostan, *it appears to be more than probable that he may resolve to relinquish that scene altogether, and either return to his own territories or repair to Poona,* to endeavour to recover any credit that he may have lost with the principal members of the Peshwa's administration.

"Should he come to either determinaiion, you are not to accede to any proposition for your remaining with both, or with either of the other Mahratta chiefs, but when Scindhia shall be ready to depart, you are to take leave of him and to proceed with your assistant and escort and suit with all convenient despatch to Benares."

From this letter it is evident that Holkar was instigated by the British to attack Sindhia, and from the words italicized above, it is also clear that the British were plotting against Sindhia; otherwise how could Lord Cornwallis have anticipated the departure of Sindhia for Poona ?

When Sindhia repaired to Poona, the British Resident from his Court was withdrawn.

Mahadji's death greatly gladdened the heart of Lord Cornwallis. When that event took place, Cornwallis was not in India. He wrote to the then Governor-General of India, Sir John Shore, from Brome on September 7, 1794:

"The death of Scindhia, of which we have received accounts overland, will nearly remove every political difficulty of your Government, and the rectitude of your measures will insure success in all the internal business of the country."

* p. 521.

not have loyally carried out the wish of the Peshwa in releasing Baji Rao had he been desired to do so. The Nana at this time was not particularly anxious to wantonly misuse his power. He was quite willing to retire from Maratha politics. He had often and often expressed this desire, but it was the Peshwa Madho Rao himself who prevailed on him not to do so. It is hardly conceivable that under the circumstances he could have been irritated by the Nana's conduct in making the confinement of the state intriguers strict and rigid.

But even supposing that the Peshwa was goaded to commit suicide, was the method which he is said to have deliberately resorted to, calculated to be a painless one? Those who deliberately commit suicide generally choose painless modes for putting an end to their existence. The Peshwa could have taken poison, or shot himself, or cut his throat, rather than throw himself from a terrace, which might or might not have resulted in death. It, therefore, appears to us that this story regarding the deliberate suicide of the Peshwa, was a fabrication to poison the minds of the people against the Nana. The Peshwa's fall from the terrace was either accidental or perhaps he was thrown down by some one of his enemies. What wonder if some one of the emissaries in the employ of the British Resident at the Court of the Peshwa accomplished this vile act in order to create confusion and disorder in Maharashtra? In the time of Mr. Mostyn we know how the reigning Peshwa was assassinated so that the Peshwa's sceptre might pass into the hands of that wicked man Raghoba. In the time of Mr. Malet it is quite possible that the son of the assassinated Peshwa fared no better than his father at the hands of some villain, in order to make room for the wicked Raghoba's degenerate son. From the hour of his birth the English were opposed to Madho Narain Rao, because he stood in the way of Raghoba becoming the Peshwa. The wicked Raghoba from interested motives disputed the authenticity of the birth of this posthumous son of his nephew, whom he had contrived to assassinate. He was supported in this dispute by the Bombay Government, who were no doubt interested in giving every assistance they could to this wretched man, not out of any love for him, but for the sake of 'fomenting domestic dissensions.'

Thus the Peshwa Madho Narain Rao was a marked man with the English and his death gave great satisfaction to them. Notwithstanding the death of Raghoba, the British did not give up all hopes of some day bringing the Marathas within their pythonic embrace. But the unfortunate death of the young Peshwa was fatal to their national independence. By his death, the wretched Raghoba's degenerate son Baji Rao became the Peshwa. He was the last of the Peshwas and with his ascending the throne of the Peshwas departed the glory of the Marathas. Nana Fadnavis, who had so long steered the bark of the state, found himself quite helpless against the conspiracies against him. With that rare foresight which entitles the Nana to rank as a real statesman, he predicted the troubles which would befall the Maratha nation by the elevation of Baji Rao to the Peshwaship. To Tukaji Holkar, who was then in Puna, the Nana

"described the enmity, which from the first dawning of reason had been instilled into Bajee Rao by his mother, against the whole of those officers who had now any experience in the affairs of

the state; he showed the danger to be apprehended from the connection between his family and the English, dwelt upon the happy state of prosperity and union which then prevailed in the Mahratta empire, and enlarged on the increasing benefits to be expected if the existing course of policy were carefully preserved.

"In these sentiments Holkar concurred, and the disposition of the other chiefs being sounded Nana ventured to disclose his plan by suggesting that Yessoda Bye, the widow of the deceased prince, who had not yet attained the age of womanhood should adopt a son, in whose name he proposed to conduct the Government as heretofore.*"

It would have been a fortunate thing for the Maratha Empire, had the Nana succeeded in his intended plan. There was nothing preposterous or unusual in the plan suggested by the Nana. It would have been in conformity with the usages of the Hindu Law. But unfortunately for the Marathas, he was not successful. It is suspected that his failure was due to his prematurely disclosing the plan to the British Resident at Puna. Grant Duff, from whose work the above extracts are made, writes :—

"In the preceding November (1795) Mr. Malet, the resident on the part of the British Government, had made a formal application to the minister for the purpose of ascertaining on what footing the Mahratta Government was to be conducted. Nana Furnavees replied that the widow of the late Peishwa was to be considered head of the empire, until the great officers of the nation had deliberated upon the succession, when the result should be communicated. He now (January 1796) therefore initimated their resolution that the widow should adopt a son, to which no objection on the part of Mr. Malet could be offered and nothing was now apparently wanting except the selection of a child and the performance of the ceremony. But Bajee Rao who had obtained information of the whole proceeding, by which he was thus unjustly to be deprived of his right, gave a further specimen of his talent for intrigue."†

The question naturally arises, how did Baji Rao obtain information of the whole proceeding? Of course, Grant Duff does not write so, but from the context of the above extract, does not there appear reason for suspecting that Malet informed Baji Rao 'of the whole proceeding by which he was thus unjustly to be deprived of his right ?'

Nana failed in his plan. Baji Rao intrigued and he succeeded. It is to be suspected that the English represented by Mr. Malet at Puna intrigued with Baji Rao against Nana Fadnavis. Anyhow, the son of the wretched Raghoba succeeded after all. He became now the Peshwa. The stars of Nana Fadnavis ceased to be in the ascendant.

All are agreed on the point that Baji Rao was not the man who under an elective system of government would have secured the largest number of votes for the responsible position which he attained. No sooner had he ascended the throne than he commenced intriguing against the Nana. The Nana had made himself obnoxious to his father and other members of his family. In Baji Rao, the father was portrayed in the son. The animosity which Raghoba cherished against Nana Fadnavis, Baji Rao tried to give effect to. Of course, Baji Rao bore personal grudge also against Nana. When the nature of the conspiracy that had been formed against him came to the knowledge of Nana Fadnavis, he had to run away for his life and spend some years

* *Ibid*, p. 521.

† *Ibid*, pp. 521-522.

in captivity. What a reward for the splendid services which the Nana had rendered to the Maratha Empire!

Baji Rao was now a veritable despot in the Maratha Empire. His government lacked wisdom and moderation. But this very defect in the Peshwa's government was favorable to the cause of the British. How these defects favored them will be understood by those who follow the course of events subsequent to the ascension of Baji Rao on the Peshwa's *masnad.*

After the battle of Kardia, the Nizam, perceiving the perfidious nature of his British ally, demanded the withdrawal of the two Company's battalions from his dominion and began to encourage the French officers under M. Raymond to discipline and train Sepoy corps. A considerable part of Raymond's corps was sent to the Nizam's frontier to occupy the districts of Kurpah and Kummam. This so greatly alarmed the Governor-General, that in his Minute of 15th June, 1795, he wrote:

"This last measure has a suspicious, not to say *criminal* appearance: and although we may acquit the Nizam of any hostile designs against the Company, I can entertain little doubt of the disposition of M. Raymond and the officers of his corps to co-operate with the French upon the Northern Circars. Such an attempt may not be probable; but as it would, if carried into execution, be attended with very serious consequences to the British possessions in India, the strongest representations ought to be made, to induce the Nizam to recall the detachment of M. Raymond."

Sir John Shore addressed a letter to the Nizam also to the above purport. He also instructed the resident at Hydarabad to represent to the Nizam, that if the French corps were not withdrawn from his frontier, the Governor-General would also order a body of troops towards the frontier.

Lord Hobart, the Governor of Madras, is also alleged to have discovered that M. Raymond was in communication with the French prisoners of war at Pondicherry, who were preparing to escape from their place of confinement and join M. Raymond. He made their imprisonment more strict, thus preventing their escape, if they had any intention to do so.

The representations of the Governor-General and the British Resident at Hydarabad fell flat on the Nizam, who appeared to be determined to brave the displeasure of the Governor-General. This incident

"sufficiently proved that the influence which had been established at the court of Hyderabad by Lord Cornwallis was entirely lost; and that the English not only could place no dependence upon the aid of the Nizam, but had reasons to apprehend that his resources might be early directed against the Company's possessions, either from the prevailing power of the French faction, from the complete subjection of his country to the Mahrattas, or from throwing himself, to escape that Mahratta subjection, into the hands of Tippoo Sultan, the irreconcilable enemy of the English,"*

It was very fortunate for the English that at this juncture, the Nizam's son, Ali Jah, raised the standard of rebellion against his father and fled from Hydarabad on the 28th June 1795. There can be very little doubt that he was prompted to take this step by the intriguing British Resident at Hydarabad. M. Raymond's corps had to be withdrawn

* Macfarlane's *Our Indian Empire,* Vol. II, p. 26.

from the Nizam's frontier and employed against his rebellious son, who was very easily defeated and captured and soon after died.

The cowardly Nizam was alarmed by the rebellion of his son and asked for the return of the two battalions which he had shortly before dismissed. The English saw their opportunity and made the Nizam accept all the measures proposed by them, as a condition preliminary to the return of the two Company's battalions.

To counteract the French influence at Hydarabad, "Sir John Shore encouraged a set of English adventurers to go to Hydarabad and offer their services to the Nizam. These adventurers were received at that court. and were countenanced by the English resident, but none of them possessed either the professional skill or the political ardour of M. Raymond ; and the corps they attempted to discipline remained but as an awkward squad compared with the battalions the Frenchman had trained."*

The cowardly Nizam never gave any more trouble to the English but became a suppliant and useful tool in their hands in raising them to power and carrying out their nefarious schemes in depriving Indians of their independence and earthly possessions.

The affairs of another Muhammadan State in Southern India attracted a great deal of attention of the Governor-General. In a previous chapter (XII), it has been stated that the Nawab of the Carnatic, or as he was more commonly called, the Nawab of Arcot, named Muhammad Ali, succeeded in vanquishing his opponent by the help he received from the English and for which services he assigned to them territory yielding four and a half lakhs of pagodas. The English were thus enabled to obtain their political footing in India. This Muhammad Ali was greatly praised by the English because he showered gold and silver on them lavishly.

Wrote a well-known Christian historian who was personally acquainted with this Muhammadan Prince, that

"He is possessed of ambition, without any of those vices which too frequently attend that passion, and his policy is never unworthy of the magnanimity of a virtuous Prince. 'A great man,' says Mahommed Ali, 'may conceal his sentiments but never ought to deceive. It was my fortune to place the way of rectitude before me in my youth, and I never deviated into the paths of deception. I met the British with that openness which they love ; and it is my honour, as well as security, to be the ally of a nation composed of princes.' This was his declaration at the conclusion of the late war, when he was put in peaceable possession of the Carnatic ; and these were his sentiments when, at the head of his father's army, he rejected the offers of France, and saved the very being of the Company by raising the siege of Fort St. David."†

It is not known how much gold and silver Dow received from Muhammad Ali for penning the above panegyric on him. But the Governor of Madras, Sir Thomas Rumbold, received very costly presents and several lakhs of rupees from the Nawab and therefore it was not unnatural for him to write in January, 1780, as follows regarding the advantages which the English derived from his friendship :

"It is unquestionably to this influence that we are indebted for a great part of our prosperity, for our success against the French in India in the last war, and for the decisive stroke made against them

* *Ibid.*, p. 27.

† Dow's *History of Hindostan*, 1770, vol. II, p. 397.

so early in the present war, to which, as affairs have since turned out, we owe perhaps our present existence in the East."

In a previous Chapter (XII) an extract has been given from Sir Charles Lawson's *Memories of Madras,* that Lord Macartney was invited by the Nawab to Arcot and offered a present of £30,000 and handsome money presents to the officers of his suite.

Mr. Keene, who narrated the above incident in the House of Commons on April 16, 1806, also stated that the Nawab told Macartney that it was quite a customary present to every Governor and had never before been refused.

Muhammad Ali died on the 13th of October, 1795, in the 79th year of his age, with a debt which was simply astounding. The subject of his enormous debts was not unknown in England and came several times under parliamentary discussion.*

But the ministry did nothing to relieve the Nawab of his heavy load of debts. The reasons for this have been very fully stated by Mill in his History,† to which no note of dissent has been appended by the editor of his work, Professor H. H. Wilson. Even the "Historian of the East India Company" is compelled to write

The claims of the alleged creditors of the Nabob of Arcot were surrounded by circumstances of the highest degree of suspicion. If ever there were claims which called for minute and searching inquiry such were these. The course taken by the ministry upon this question tended to cast great discredit upon them, and afford to the opposition favourable ground of attack. On the 28th of February, 1785, Mr. Fox called the attention of the House of Commons to the subject, and moved for the papers connected with the inquiry. The motion was lost, as were two similar motions in the House of Lords; but opportunity was taken to impugn the motives of the ministry, and to adduce plausible reasons for believing that the decision was attributable to parliamentary influence. It will be recollected that a person named Paul Benfield was one of the chief creditors of the Nabob of Arcot, and that he represented several other creditors. Much jugglery had been subsequently practised, and the name of Benfield had disappeared from the list of creditors, and been restored to it, as circumstances suited. At length Benfield had procured himself to be elected to Parliament, together (according to Burke) with seven other persons, of like principles and vices with himself. He soon afterwards departed for Madras, leaving as his representative Mr. Richard Atkinson, a gentleman whom the ministry delighted to honour, on the ground, it was alleged and believed, of the pains which he had taken to promote the return of members of Parliament favourable to their interests. The defence of the ministers was weak, but their majority was large. The papers were refused, partly on the ground that the public interests might suffer from giving them publicity. It is not easy to suppose that the ministers were influenced by this fear, for a book-seller had obtained a copy of the papers, and published them."§

At page 44 of the Introduction to this work, William Howitt has been quoted, who wrote :

"What then is this system of torture by which the possessions of the Indian princes have been wrung from them ? It is this—the skilful application of the process by which cunning men create debtors, and then force them at once to submit to their most exorbitant demands."

Muhammad Ali died, bequeathing the legacy of enormous debts to his son, Omdut-ul-Omrah, who succeeded to the *masnad* of the Carnatic on the 16th October,

* See Macfarlane, I, p. 226.

† Vol. V, pp. 17-31.

§ Thornton's *History of British India,* Second Edition, London, 1859, pp. 181-182.

1795. In the time of Lord Cornwallis, a treaty was entered into with Muhammad Ali which vested the sole military power in the Company. But this treaty was not considered good enough by Lord Hobart, the Governor of Madras, who, on the accession of Omdut-ul-Omrah, tried to impose upon him a new treaty by which he would cede to the Company the districts mortgaged for the payment of the pecuniary instalments, and also some of the forts in the Carnatic ; and yield the right of sovereignty over the Polygars.

The new Nawab did not accede to any of the demands of the Madras Governor and although the Governor-General and his Council wrote to Lord Hobart on the 28th of October, 1795, to endeavour to obtain the consent of the Nawab to the cession of all his territories, yet they did not approve of Lord Hobart's action and so for the present at least no portion of the Carnatic was annexed to the Company's Government.

It was not only the affairs of Southern India narrated above which engaged the attention of Shore during the term of his office as Governor-General of India, but those of Oudh and Rohilkhand also gave him a good deal of trouble. The Rohilla Chief, Fyazulla Khan, died in 1794 and the question of his successor had to be settled. Gholam Muhammad after killing his eldest brother, Ali Khan, the heir-presumptive to his father. Fyazulla Khan, usurped the reins of government in Rohilkhand. When this came to the knowledge of Shore it was his intention

"to wrest the country entirely from the family of Fyzoolah Khan, notwithstanding the rights of the son of Mahommed Ali, guaranteed by the British Government; and notwithstanding the rights of the people of the country happy under the frugal government of the Rohilla chief, menaced with misery and ruin under the exactions of the Vizier, to which, with a full knowledge of the circumstances, the British ruler was about to condemn them. The rapidity of Sir Robert Abercromby anticipated the arrival of the instructions which were forwarded to this effect. A battle was fought at Bitowrah, in which, after making a partial impression upon the British line, the Rohillas were defeated. Negotiation followed, and an arrangement was made. The treasures of the late Prince, Fyzoolah were given up to the Vizier. And a jaghir of ten lacs of revenue, under the express guarantee of the English Government, was granted to Ahmed Ali, the son of Mohammad Ali."*

The manner in which Shore dealt with Oudh was as atrocious as, if not more than, that of Warren Hastings with that State, and for which he deserved impeachment. He wrote :

"The Government of Oude, both in the opinions of the natives, as well as externally, is considered a dependency upon the English, *whatever its relations under treaties may be.* Scindiah refers the investiture of Vizier Ali by his majesty the Moghul to the Governor-General, and there are many respectable families in Lucknow who live under the protection of the British influence. In the estimate of the natives of India, the Kingdom of Oude is held as a gift from the Company to Sujah-ul-Dowlah, and as a dependent chief."

Acting on that presumption, he was not ashamed to violate the treaty of his predecessor, Lord Cornwallis, with Oudh. Major Bird, Assistant Resident at Lucknow, wrote in his well-known work on "Dacoitee in Excelsis ; or the spoliation of Oudh, by the East India Compuny :"

"The boons of Lord Cornwallis were conferred, however, only to be withdrawn after his

*Mill, Vol. vi, pp. 33-34.

departure, by other hands; but the respite of the devoted province lasted for his time. A commercial treaty was concluded in 1788 between the Company and the Wuzier, in a fair and liberal spirit. The subsidy of fifty lakhs under these conditions, as Lord Cornwallis admitted previous to his quitting India, and while admonishing the Wuzier, was paid with regularity. Oude was again properous, happy, and solvent. But the engagement that no further demands should be made, entered into by Lord Cornwallis with all solemnity, was respected no longer than he himself remained in India. The succeeding Governor-General, Sir John Shore, required 'the wretched Vizier' to add to his former subsidy the expense of one European and one native regiment of Cavalry, provided the annual amount should not exceed five and a half lakhs of rupees. Thus the engagement of Lord Cornwallis was shamefully violated. Again the scale of charges and exactions which the Wuziar must have regarded as finally fixed, began to mount, and gathering courage from his sense of injustice, he boldly refused to pay one cowry more. Vain courage! Vain confidence in an incontestable promise and declared guarantee! The unsophisticated Wuzier had yet to learn to what lengths "sincere *friendship and firm union"* would *encourage his disinterested allies.* The British authorities supecting, it is said, Maharajah Jhaoo Lall, his minister, to be the cause of his refusal seized upon that gentleman, and, *in despite of all the remonstrances of the Wuzier, detained him,* although guiltless of any crime, as a State prisoner in their own territory; and then, to compel the Wuzier to grant the additional subsidy, Sir John Shore, in March, 1797, proceeded to Lucknow, and by means of threats, artifices, &c., forced him to make the addendum they required. Thus, an additional body of troops, consisting of two regiments of cavalry, was quartered upon the Kingdom of Oude at an additional charge of five lakhs and fifty thousand rupees annually; and another result was attained, which was probably neither desired nor deprecated:—Asoph-ood-Dowlah took his treatment so much to heart, that he fell ill and refused medicine, exclaiming, "There is no cure for a broken heart"; and so, a few months subsequently, died, and left the Company, as their custom was, to improve the incident of a fresh succession.'* Pp. 32-34.

Shore possessed the reputation of being a pious Christian. So the death of the non-Christian ruler of Oudh which he was instrumental in effecting gladdened his heart, for this proved beneficial to the Company of merchant "adventurers" of his creed. As a follower and friend of Warren Hastings, he followed in his footsteps, and Burke was right in his objection to the appointment of Shore as Governor-General of India, for that orator apprehended that the latter would prove no better than the Governor-General whom he had impeached.

Vazir Ali, a natural son of Asaph-ud-Dowlah, suceeded to the *mansad* of Oudh and this was formally acknowledged by the Governor-General. If the succession was not valid, Shore should have made inquiries about it before approving of it. It was not difficult for him to do so, since there was

"a resident at the court of Lucknow whose duty it was to watch and to report to the government which he represented everything of the slightest public importance, the general disbelief of the claim of the recognised son of the sovereign to the inheritance for which he was destined should have been either unknown or disregarded by the British Government."*

But shortly afterwards, Shore discovered (?) that Sadat Ali was more eligible to the throne of Oude than Vazir Ali. Sadat Ali was a brother of the last ruler and was living as a pensioner at Benares. He was at first not considered eligible.

"For, during the Cheyte Sing insurrection at Benares, and the general revolt which followed it, the

* Thornton's *History of British India,* 2nd Edition, p. 227.

rebels were heard to declare that they were acting under the orders of the Begums, of Cheyte Sing, and of Saadat Ali."*

"Sir John", proceeds the same writer, "opined for Saadut Ali, but he had not yet made up his mind, or he had not yet ascertained what price Saadut Ali would pay to the Company for his elevation to the *musnad.* Warren Hastings had been accused of holding an auction at Lucknow; but Sir John now figured more in the light of an auctioneer in that city."†

Major Bird writes:

"Seeing that a better bargain could be made with a brother of the deceased Wuzier, Sir John Shore repaired to Benares, and proposed to the latter, who was named Saadat Allie, to dethrone Vizier Allie, offering the support of the Company on the intelligible condition that the subsidy should be largely increased, and that their support should be paid for otherwise in money and kind. To this stipulation, bold and bare-faced, the aspirant to the princedom 'cheerfully consented,' and, after a preliminary process at Lucknow, termed in the 'Parliamentary Return of Treaties' 'full investigation,' and purporting to be an inquiry into the spuriousness of Vizier Allie's birth, that prince was deposed, and Saadat Allie was proclaimed in his stead, at Lucknow, on the 21st January, 1798."

Then, on the 21st February, 1798, a treaty of seventeen articles, in its principal stipulations absolutely stinking of rupees, was signed in pursuance of the previous understanding between Sadat Ali and Shore.

" . . . . The Wuzier is to pay up arrears. The Wuzier is required to give up the fort of Allahabad, *and to pay eight lakhs of rupees to put it in repair for the presentees. The Wuzier is to pay three* lakhs for repairing fort Futty Guhr. The Wuzier is to pay expenses of moving troops, the number of lakhs being as yet indefinite. The Wuzier is to pay the Company twelve lakhs in consideration of their expenses in establishing his right. The Wuzier is to pay a pension of one lakh and a half to his deposed rival. And lastly, by article 2, the annual subsidy paid by the Wuzier, and which amounted to something over fifty-six lakhs, is now raised to seventy-six lakhs, ... In all, a million sterling and the fort of Allahabad are obtained in a single year by the East India Company, half of it in violation of the engagements of Lord Cornwallis, and in virtue of the union now growing firmer between themselves and the victim in their coils. . . . . All Europeans, *except the servants of the Company,* were, without any distinction whatsoever, to be banished from His Excellency's country, one object of this arbitrary measure obviously being, that the exactions and other acts of injustice of which the local government and their officers were at this time guilty, might not get wind, and by reaching the ears of the British public, come, like the atrocities of Hastings, under the cognizance of Parliament." (*Dacoitee in Excelsis, pp., Allahabad reprint, 26-29)*

Regarding this Treaty, Sir Henry Lawrence wrote in the *Calcutta Review* for January, 1845:

"What will perhaps most strike the English reader of Sir John Shore's treaty is, the entire omission of the slightest provision for the good government of Oudh. The people seemed as it were sold to the highest bidder. Vizier Ali was young, dissolute, and needy; Saadat Ali was middle-aged; known to be prudent, and believed to be rich. Being of penurious habits, he had, even on his petty allowance as a younger son, amassed several lakhs of rupees; and, in short a more promising sponge to squeeze, than his nephew. From the general tenor of Sir John Shore's life, we believe that his heart was in the right place, though this his last diplomatic transaction, might, if taken alone' lead us to a different conclusion. Wherever his heart was, his head at least must have been wool-gathering. He set a bad precedent. He made the *masnad* of Oudh a mere transferable property in the hands of the British Governor and he left the people of Oudh at the mercy of a shackled and

† Macfarlane, Vol. II, p. 30.
§ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

guaranteed ruler. This may have been liberality, but it was a liberality of a very spurious sort. Much as we admire Lord Teignmouth's domestic character, we are obliged entirely to condemn the whole tenor of Oudh negotiations. Historians have hitherto let him down slightly, but his Lordship may be judged by the same standard as other public officers ; by the right or by the wrong that he committed, and not by his supposed motives, or his private character."

It was during the tenure of office of Sir John Shore that in 1795 the settlements of the Dutch in India were taken from them ; Cochin after a great resistance. The Dutch were deprived of their possessions in Asia, such as Ceylon, Malacca, Banda and Amboyna. The French settlement of Mauritius and the rich Spanish possessions of Manilla were made parts of the British empire mostly at the expense of India.

It is true that Shore did not levy war on any Indian ruler. But it was due to the finances of the country being low, that he was prevented from doing so.

Shore was created an Irish peer on the 24th October, 1797, by the little of Baron Teignmouth. He resigned the government of India and sailed for England in March, 1798.

Notwithstanding his reputation of being a man of "Christian principles" he emulated Warren Hastings in his administration of India, for he had received his training in the school of that first Christian Governor-General of India.

CHAPTER XV

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY'S ADMINISTRATION (1798-1805 A.D.)

HIS APPOINTMENT AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA

The history of the British in India entered on a new stage when the Earl of Mornington, afterwards better known as the Marquess Wellesley, was sent out as Governor-General of India. He coloured red the map of a large part of India, and to achieve this, he did not scruple to adopt means the nature of which he never stooped to question.

Before describing the Indian career of the Marquess Wellesley and the way in which he brought about the extinction of the independence of the different States of India, it will be necessary to refer to his nativity and private life. This Marquess was a native of Ireland and was born on June 20, 1760. His full name was Richard Colley Wellesley. In those days when Ireland possessed a separate Parliament of her own, he was a member of that Parliament and was known to be a great admirer and friend of the Irish patriot Grattan. When he came over to England, he entered the English House of Commons in 1784, and it is said that "his earlier political attachments were all of a Liberal complexion; .... but with the progress of the French Revolution his division from the "Foxites" became marked. He was an enemy to Parliamentary Reform. ....His opinions were biassed by his fears of the Revolution."

Of his private life, it is only necessary to remark, that he did not particularly respect the seventh commandment, for "early in life he had formed a connexion with a brilliant French woman whom he afterwards made his wife. Their children were not legitimate."

If we remember these facts, namely, that he was a native of Ireland, and that he was of loose morals and that he kept a French woman as his concubine, and although he made her his wife, she did not care much for him, for she did not accompany him to India, and separated, if not legally divorced, from him, on his return from India, we shall be able to understand the policy which moved him to adopt the measures well known to all students of Indian history. The keynote of all his Indian measures is to be found in his intense hatred of the French. In all that he did in subverting the independence of the different States of India, he had the Frenchman in his brain.* It is probable that he would not have suffered so much from Francophobia, had he not

* The following extracts from his "Private and Secret" letters to his Excellency, Sir Alfred Clarke, Commander-in-Chief in India, from Fort St. George, 4th May, 1799, will show his Francophobia :—

"The number of French established at Calcutta and in the provinces, is now a most alarming evil: I must request you will immediately institute a most active inquiry into the state of their numbers and conduct; and that you will send to Europe, without hesitation, every man who can not give you a satisfactory account of his principles and connections. At Calcutta there are not less than one

been attached to a French woman who did not respond to his love. For, on no other ground could his hatred of the French be satisfactorily accounted for. Had he been a patriot, that is to say, had he loved his native country of Ireland, he would not have hated the French so bitterly as he did. Every Irishman, if true to himself, and if he possesses any self-respect, ought to be grateful to the French, for that was the nation which tried its utmost to help the Irish in their troubles and sufferings.

Wellesley knew something of Indian affairs, for he was appointed a member of the Board of Control in 1793. He had also read Indian history, and it also appears that as far back as 1786, he took interest in Indian questions, for he wrote from Brighton to Grenville, July 30th 1786, telling him that he was reading Orme, and asking for 'some general account of the European Settlements in the East Indies.' From 1793 till he sailed out for India, that is during a space of four years, he studied Indian affairs very closely. Revd. Mr. Hutton in his biographical sketch of the Marquess Wellesley, published in the Rulers of India series, writes that "he (Wellesley) had the advantage of an intimate acquaintance with Lord Cornwallis, whose Indian administration had been the most successful portion of his chequered career." Most successful, because Cornwallis showed, if not paved, the way to establishing the supremacy of England in India. It may be that Cornwallis tutored Wellesley to pursue those measures which brought about the subversion of the independence of the different States and principalities of India. Wellesley only followed in the footsteps of Cornwallis in extending the influence of the British over the natives of India.

The Governor of Madras, Lord Hobart, who had been promised the Governor-Generalship of India, was disappointed when he learnt that the Home Government were not inclined to bestow that high distinction on him. The true reason for this slight shown to him appears to be that he did not help Sir John Shore in the absorption of the State of the Carnatic. The measures of reform which he proposed, did not please the government of Sir John Shore, and the Court of Directors. So it was found necessary to search for some one else to fill the high post of Governor-General of India. At that time, Mr. Pitt was at the head of the Ministry. It is a well-known fact that Mr. Pitt was no "Little Englander." He wished to extend the influence of England beyond the seas. The creation of Greater Britain owes its impulse to Pitt. Ireland had a Parliament of its own, and used to manage its own affairs locally This did not please the Ministry of which Pitt was the leader. He wanted to bring about an union of Ireland with England. Mr. Stead has proved from historical documents, that the British Government provoked the Irish rebellion of 1798 in order to bring about the Union. He writes :

hundred and fifty French,—all, I believe, dangerous subjects. They abound in Chittagong, where not a Frenchman should be left on any account. It would also be desirable to send to Europe as many as possible of the inhabitants of Chandernagore. In the name of the French, I mean to include all foreign Europeans connected with France. At Chinsurah there are many most malevolent persons who ought to be sent to Europe. In the interior of our provinces every Frenchman indiscriminately ought to be taken up and sent to Calcutta, and from thence, if a suspicious character, to Europe. . . It appears to me that you cannot give too serious an attention to this point ; . . . ."
Memoir and Correspondence of Marquess Wellesley. By R. R. Pearce, Vol. I, pp. 272-273.

Marquis of Wellesley

William Carey

"Certainly if it had not been for the rebellion, which was, as we have seen, the handiwork of the Government, there would have been no chance of carrying the Union."

On the retirement of Sir John Shore, Pitt's choice naturally fell on Cornwallis. For the second time, he was offered the Governor-Generalship of India. Pitt knew that Cornwallis would carry on his policy of acquiring territories in India for England. Cornwallis accepted the offer and was about to sail out for India. But the hell which Pitt had let loose in Ireland, required the strong hand of a tried soldier and administrator to manage. Cornwallis was just the man to fit the situation. So Pitt found that Cornwallis could be better employed nearer home to effect the Union of Ireland with Great Britain. Consequently Cornwallis was made the Viceroy of Ireland and he pleased Pitt immensely by his success in effecting the Union.

Lord Mornington had been previously offered the Governorship of Madras. But now when Cornwallis was appointed Viceroy of Ireland, Pitt could not choose a more proper tool to carry out his designs in India than Lord Mornington.* Accordingly he was nominated Governor-General of India. Revd. Mr. Hutton writes :—

"After a week at Holwood with Pitt, spent in anxious discussions of the needs and prospects of our Indian possessions, Mornington was definitely appointed Governor-General of India."

It is conjectured by some that during this time, Pitt instructed Lord Mornington to found an empire in India to compensate for the loss of America. This appears quite reasonable, when we remember that Pitt was no "Little Englander," that he provoked the Irish to revolt, in order to bring about the Union, and that he supported Lord Mornington in all his Indian measures.†

So the Earl of Mornington, after receiving his instructions from Pitt, left England on 7th November, 1797. His brother, Arthur, the future Duke of Wellington, had already preceded him to India. He brought out his youngest brother, Henry, as his political secretary. Thus a cabal of three brothers was formed in India, with the object of carrying out the instructions of Mr. Pitt as to the founding of an empire for England in

* In his monograph on Pitt, published in the "Twelve English Statesmen" Series, Lord Rosebery has devoted a chapter to "Pitt and Wellesley." He writes that Pitt's

"friendships were few, but they were close, and even tender to a remarkable degree. Of Wilberforce and him it was said that they were like brothers. A scarcely less affectionate though a later intimacy was that with Lord Mornington, afterwards Lord Wellesley, the great Viceroy (*sic*) whose brilliant rule in India conferred such renown on himself, though it afterwards disabled him to a great extent for the rough and tumble of English party strife." (P. 201).

In that Chapter Lord Rosebery has published some letters of Pitt to Wellesley regarding which, in a footnote, he writes:

"These letters, which are in some respects the most intetesting that we have of Pitt's, have been made available for this little book by the generous kindness of Mr. Alfred Montgomery."

† Mr. Pitt's Act of 1784 in which it was stated that the East India Company did not desire to make conquests or add to their territories was merely a blind to lull suspicions. It was during Mr. Pitt's *regime* that Cornwallis attacked Tipu without provocation. It was he who induced Cornwallis to accept the Governor-Generalship of India for the second time in succession to Sir John Shore. When he could not spare Cornwallis, because the Irish affairs demanded his presence in that country, he appointed Lord Mornington to the high office of the Governor-General of India, but not till he had kept him as his guest for a week, during which time he instructed him about Indian affairs.

India. Singularly enough, his wife did not accompany him. It has been already mentioned above, that she was a French woman and had been in his keep before she was legally married to him. The children whom she gave birth to were all illegitimate. It is probable that had she not been on bad terms with him, he would not have been so much a victim to Franko-phobia, the symptoms of which he so markedly exhibited in India. Her presence in India would have, in all likelihood, averted many a war and bloody contest.

At the period of Lord Mornington's departure from England, India was in a state of profound peace ; and the noble lord made others believe that he would do nothing to disturb that profound peace. But he was thus acting the part of a cosummate hypocrite ; he was thus trying to lull others into a false confidence regarding his pacific intentions to enable him to carry out his designs without let or hindrance.

That his intentions were anything but pacific will be evident to all from the extracts given below. Those historians who consider the Irish Governor-General as a man who was obliged to levy war on the several independent states of India, are either ignorant of Lord Mornington's views or else deliberately misrepresent facts. This Irish Lord was the aggressor in all the wars with the princes of India. He did not conceal his sentiments when he wrote to Lady Anne Barnard, wife of the Governor of the Cape, with whom he spent 'a couple of easy pleasant months' at the Cape on his way out to India. In his letter dated Fort William, October 2nd 1800, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to her :-

"On what honors you compliment me I know not. I am persuaded you have too much good sense and good taste to esteem an Irish peerage a complimentary, or complimentable, honor in my case. . . . . . with respect to rewards of another description, I have received none—I expect none—and (be not surprised) perhaps you may hear that I will accept none. This brief exclamation will admit you to the secret agonies of my poor dear heart, or soul, and give you some light to discover the causes of my ill-health, . . . But do not suppose me to be so. weak as to meditate hasty resignations, or passionate returns to Europe, or fury, or violence of any kind. No ; *I will shame their injustice by aggravating the burthen of their obligations to me ; I will heap kingdoms upon kingdoms, victory upon victory, revenue upon revenue ; I will accumulate glory and wealth and power, until the ambition and avarice even of my masters shall cry mercy : and then I will show them what dust in the balance their tardy gratitude is, in the estimation of injured, neglected, disdainful merit.*"

The italicized sentences in the above extract clearly prove that the Marquess was not a peace-loving man, but, on the contrary, was bent on wars and adoption of other questionable means having for their object the increase of the power and wealth of the British in India.

Lord Mornington did not come out direct to India, but stayed a few days at the Cape of Good Hope. He utilized the few days' stay by maturing those plans which helped him in destroying the liberties of the people of India. Luckily for him, he met here two men who were thirsting for revenge on Tipu. These two men had resided for a long time in India. Their names were David Baird and Major Kirkpatrick. David Baird was a prisoner in Tipu's camp. Perhaps he was ill-treated by Tipu. It is related that Tipu took pleasure in making Baird play the monkey before him. For this purpose, Baird was clothed like a monkey and made to go up and down a tall bamboo pole.

Having been made to suffer these humiliations, it was not strange that he should have been anxious to see the downfall of Tipu. Of Tipu's cruelties and atrocities the only witnesses are the British prisoners, and their statements should never be relied on, because it was their interest to paint Tipu in the blackest color possible. For, whatever be the teachings of the Bible, they believed in and acted up to the proverb which says, "Vengeance sleeps long, but never dies."

The other man, named Major Kirkpatrick, had been Resident at the Court of Hydarabad and had gone in 1797 to the Cape of Good Hope for the benefit of his health.

Major Kirkpatrick was an old diplomatist. He had been trained in the school of Warren Hastings and also of Cornwallis. At one time he was Resident at the Court of Mahadji Sindhia. It is not unreasonable to suppose that he was the chief adviser to the bastard Maratha Chief regarding those measures which estranged the latter from Nana Fadnavis, and ultimately brought on disasters on the Maratha Empire. However, it appears that after some time Mahadji and Captain Kirkpatrick did not pull on well. In a Secret Despatch, dated Fort William, March 4, 1787, Lord Cornwallis wrote - to the Secret Committee :

"From my letter to Captain Kirkpatrick, dated the 1st instant, you will observe that of late he has met with some slights and inattentions from Sindhia, to which, as appearing to him to be an intended disrespect to the Government, he thought it improper to submit without some remonstrance; but I am in hopes that those grounds of complaint will soon be removed; and as I am determined on our side to act with fairness and moderation by Sindhia, as well as all the rest of the neighbouring States, I see no reason to apprehend that such altercation will essentially disturb our present tranquility in that quarter."

Lord Cornwallis' letter to Captain Kirkpatrick, dated the 1st March, 1787, is nowhere published in the Cornwallis correspondence edited by Ross. Kirkpatrick's despatches to Cornwallis also have not seen the light of day.* So it is impossible to judge of the grounds of complaint which the British Resident preferred against the Maratha Chief. But Cornwallis removed him from the Court of Sindhia and employed him on an Embassy to Nepal. He was instructed to spy out the country and to note the military strength and strategical positions of Nepal, for such information would be of great use in a war with Nepal. After his return from Nepal, he was appointed Resident at the Court of Hydarabad. As Resident, he was not content with his duty of reporting to the Supreme Government at Calcutta of what transpired at Hydarabad, but he also meddled in the internal affairs of that State. He succeeded in introducing American and British adventurers in the Nizam's service so that they might act as counterpoison to the French officers in that State, and thus create disorder and confusion. In answering one of the questions put to him by Lord Mornington during his detention at the Cape of Good Hope, Major Kirkpatrick did not conceal the fact that he had done all he could to poison the minds of the Nizam and his ministers against the French. To quote his own words, he said :

* The grave misunderstanding between Kirkpatrick and Mahadji originated in a quarrel between a washerman of Raja Deshmukh, Mahadji's son-in-law and commander, and a Sepoy of Kirkpatrick's escort. *Vide* Sir Jadunath Sarkar's paper on "English Residents with Mahadji Sindhia" in Proceedings of Meetings of Indian Historical Records Commission, vol. XI, pp. 12-13.

"It may be thought that the abominable tendency of French principles (in whatever view considered), and the evil consequences which resulted to almost every power that nation has drawn into its alliance, if properly exposed and illustrated, ought to have the effect of exciting, at the different Courts of India, such a detestation of the one, and dread of the other, as to render any connexion between them next to impossible. But though *these are topics which have not been neglected,* and though they doubtlessly seem well calculated to produce the sort of impressions to be wished for, yet it would be wrong to place any great reliance in considerations which unfortunately have not always had the weight they were entitled to with European powers better qualified, in general, to appreciate their force (as being more conversant in systematic and prospective politics), more immediately liable to suffer from a coalition with the new repubilc ; and finally, more interested to oppose its aggrandizement, than any of the princes or States of India can be."*

From the words italicized in the above extract, it is clear that attempts had been made by the British residents at the courts of the Indian Princes to blacken the character of the French people. It is quite foreign to our purpose to say anything regarding the French Revolution. We may differ from Burke in his sweeping condemnation of the Revolution, and may not subscribe to the sentiments of Thomas Paine contained in his "Rights of Man," but no reasonable man will be found who will not agree with the following remarkable utterance of the great Italian patriot, Joseph Mazzini, who wrote :

"Five-and-twenty millions of men do not rise up as one man, nor rouse one half of Europe at their call, for a mere word, an empty formula, a shadow. The Revolution,—that is to say, the tumult and fury of the Revolution—perished ; the form perished, as all forms perish when their task is accomplished, but the *idea* of the Revolution survived. That idea, freed from every temporary envelop or disguise, now reigns for ever, a fixed star in the intellectual firmament ; it is numbered among the conquests of Humanity.

"Every great idea is immortal : the French Revolution rekindled the sense of *Right,* of liberty, and of equality in the human soul, never henceforth to be extinguished ; it awakened France to the consciousness of the inviolability of her national life : and awakened in every people a perception of the powers of collective will, and a conviction of ultimate victory, of which none can deprive them. It summed up and concluded (in the political sphere) one epoch of Humanity, and led us to the confines of the next.

"These are results which will not pass away : they defy every protocol, constitutional theory, or *veto* of despotic power."

While the French people were proclaiming Liberty, Fraternity and Equality all over the world, their neighbours of England were doing everything in their power against the spread of those principles.

Lord Mornington's meeting with Major Kirkpatrick at the Cape was of great help to him in his plan of establishing the supremacy of the British in India. The idea of bringing the States of India under subsidiary alliance was that of Major Kirkpatrick. The letter which Lord Mornington wrote from the Cape to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, show that the Ministers (especially the Prime Minister, Mr. Pitt) had instructed him to see if England could obtain the supremacy in India by some means or other. His first letter to Mr. Dundas, dated Cape of Good Hope, 23rd February, 1798, begins with these remarkable words :

Wellesley's Despatches, Vol. I, p. 646.

"Among the subjects which you recommended to my early consideration upon my arrival in India, you particularly urged the necessity of my attending with the utmost degree of vigilance to the system, now pursued almost universally by the native princes, of retaining in their service numbers of European or American officers, under whom the native troops are trained and disciplined in imitation of the corps of Sepoys in the British Service."

It was Pitt who, in 1784, proposed and carried a Bill through both Houses of Parliament, which made every one believe, that the Christian merchants constituting the East India Company had no desire to make conquests, or add to their territories, in India. Moreover, by this Bill, as the Court of Directors wrote in 1805,

"The control and direction of Indian affairs is not with the Company. . . . . All the great wheels of the machine are moved by Government at home, who direct and control the Company in all their principal operations in India."

So the hypocrisy and insincerity of Pitt are quite apparent from his instructions to Lord Mornington "to attend with the utmost degree of vigilance" to the military strength of the different princes of India. If he was sincerely desirous of not founding an empire in India, why should he have concerned himself with the military resources of the Indian Princes ?

From the perusal of the letters which Lord Mornington wrote to the Right Hon'ble Henry Dundas from the Cape of Good Hope, it becomes quite evident that he meant to pursue a spirited foreign policy during his tenure of office as Governor-General of India. He intended to carry into execution the suggestion of Major Kirkpatrick, regarding the subsidiary alliances with the Indian Princes. He was also determined to annihilate the already humbled Tipu. We shall adduce evidence further on to prove that he contemplated a war with Tipu during his detention at the Cape. It is probable that Cornwallis had impressed him with the ease and facility with which Tipu could be crushed.

To make the exterior symbols of the Christian Power visible in India, Marquess Wellesley took certain measures to impress on the minds of the "heathens" of India that the Company's government was a "Christian" Government.

He "prohibited the publication of newspapers on Sunday. His Lordship's motive in taking this step, in connection with other regulations, was, that the due observation of the Christian Sabbath, without interfering with the rights, duties, obligations, or prejudices of the native population, should act morally on the mind of India, in utter unacquaintance with the nature and character of the true God. Apart from all cant and pharisaical formality, the Sabbath is a blessed institution in any land and has justly been assigned as one of the great springs of European Civilization, . . .

"But great as the influence of the institution of the Sabbath on a community like our own unquestionably is, if we reflect, we shall see that it is designed to have a ten-fold greater influence in a land peopled by a race in ignorance of revealed religion.

"The observance of the Sabbath is essentially a public acknowledgment of belief in the God who made the heavens and the earth ; and the institution of the Christian Sabbath necessarily implies a profession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Every seventh day, therefore, an unostentatious proclamation of the true God was made in India ; the recurrence of a day of rest and refreshment for man and beast, after the labour of the week, necessarily awakened curiosity and inquiry among the heathen dwellers in the British territory. . . . . Lord Wellesley conceived that it was the duty of the British Government in India to make a public official profession of allegiance to the

author of Christianity; and . . . . . . not to conceal the fact from the subjects of the British Crown in Hindustan, that the British nation were the worshippers of the God of heaven."*

The College at Fort William, Calcutta, was established with the ostensible obiect of training the civil and military officers of Government, but with the ulterior motive of evangelizing the natives of India. Writes the above-named author, that the Fort William College

"was also a most important agent in furthering the evangelization of India." (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 289.)

He quotes one Revd. Claudius Buchanan, who wrote in 1805, that

"many circumstances concur to make it probable that the light of revelation is now dawning on the Asiatic world. Under the auspices of the College of Fort William the scriptures are in course of translation into the languages of almost the 'whole continent of Oriental India.' . . . . . Directed by it, *the learned natives from every quarter of India, and from the parts beyond Persia and Arabia*, come to the source of knowledge: they mark our principles, ponder the volume of inspiration, 'and hear every man in his own tongue the wonderful works of God'."†

In March 1805, Revd. Claudius Buchanan wrote to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury:

"In the presence of the learned body of Asiatics assembled at the College of Fort William, the Christian scriptures have been exhibited for translation into the Oriental tongues Under the auspices of the Marquess Wellesley, who by favour of Providence now presides in India, a version of the Holy Scriptures may be expected, not in one language alone, but in seven of the Oriental tongues, ... In the centre of the Pagan world, and at the chief seat of superstition and idolatry, these works are carried on, and the unconverted natives assist in the translations."§

Mr. Charles Grant, whom a well-known Christian publicist (Dr. John Murdoch of Madras) was pleased to designate as "the Christian Director of the East Indian Company," wrote to Lord Wellesley, on September 14th, 1801:

"No accounts from the East have afforded me so much pleasure as those of the countenance your Lordship has given to religion. If you had seen fit to recommend the diffusion of it among the heathen, no one could have done this with so much effect; and though now diversities of opinion on some other Indian subjects, and consequent divisions unhappily prevail, yet in the true glory of espousing such an object all the best judgments of the present and future times I am convinced would be agreed."**

Thus it will be understood that Lord Wellesley contributed not a little to the rise of the Christian Power in India by the sword, and that shedding of blood and fraud and force as well as trying to make the Holy Scriptures of the Christians accessible to the "heathens" in their own languages, were the means adopted by him.

Lord Wellesley was determined to annihilate or curb the Musalmans and Marathas, by force or fraud. This explains his Machiavellian policy and Occidental diplomacy in dealing with the independent Princes of Hindustan. It was by fraud that he made the Nizam and the Peshwa prisoners, deprived the Nawab of the Carnatic, the Raja of Tanjore, the Nawab Vazir of Oudh, the Nawabs of Surat and Farrukhabad of their territories, and by force ruined Tipu and some of the Maratha princes such as Sindia, Holkar and the Raja of Nagpur.

* *Life and Correspondence of Maraquess Wellesley*, by R. R. Pearce, Vol. I, pp. 351-353.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 294-295.
§ *Ibid.*, p. 296.
** *Ibid.*, p. 297.

CHAPTER XVI

LORD MORNINGTON'S TREATMENT OF THE NIZAM

When Lord Mornington, on his way out to India, was detained at the Cape of Good Hope, he opened the Secret Despatches addressed to the Honourable the Court of Directors. From those secret despatches, as well as from conversations with Major Kirkpatrick, he came to know of the state of affairs which obtained in the different Native States of India. In his two letters to the Right Hon'ble Mr. Dundas from the Cape, dated 23rd and 28th February, 1798, he clearly indicated the policy which he would pursue in India. In the former, he asked Mr. Dundas to "bear in mind the state of the Native Powers in India at this moment : and recollect that the greatest advantage which we now possess is the present deranged condition of those interests.' That is to say, Lord Mornington was glad to inform Mr. Dundas that the favourable opportunity for establishing the supremacy of the East India Company in India had arrived on account of the deranged condition of the affairs of the Native Powers in India ; this opportunity should not be lost.

There were only two powers in the peninsula of India which had ever crossed blades with the Company for gaining supremacy in India. These two powers were Hydar Ali with his son Tipu, and the Marathas. The State of Hydarabad, that is, of the Nizam, had never had the courage to fight the Company.

When Lord Mornington asked Mr. Dundas "to bear in mind the state of the Native Powers in India," he referred to Tipu, to the Marathas and the Nizam. Tipu had been unjustly attacked by Cornwallis and been made to give up half his dominion, as well as a very large amount of money as war indemnity. It speaks well for the good govern ment of his State that he punctually paid up the stipulated sum. When Cornwallis imposed the large indemnity on Tipu, he was under the impression that that prince would not be able to fulfil his engagements as to money payments owing to his resources being crippled, for he was made to part with half of his dominion. That nobleman must have thought that the East India Company would thus be furnished with a pretext for absorbing Tipu's remaining territory for that prince's inability to pay the stipulated sum of war indemnity. However, in this Cornwallis and others were disappointed. Other pretexts were fabricated to which we shall refer further on.

The Marathas also were not objects of such terror and dread to the Company as they had been in the time of Warren Hastings. Mr. Mostyn at Puna and Captain William Kirkpatrick at Sindia's Court had admirably carried out their instructions as to creating confusion and disorder in the Maratha Empire. Lord Mornington wrote to Mr. Dundas from the Cape of Good Hope on the 28th February, 1798 :—

"I am aware that some opinions have been thrown out from very respectable quarters, the tendency of which appears to lead towards a sentiment approaching to satisfaction in the dissensions and divisions which have lately taken place among the Mahrattas. . . . . Fortunately no one of the

co-estates, nor the head of the Empire, has yet acquired the means of wielding the united force of the whole body ; but while some of the chiefs have made great and valuable acquisitions of dominion, and considerably increased their military strength, the authority and influence of the Peishwa has rapidly declined ; and it could not now be expected that any considerable body of chiefs would be disposed to prosecute, under his direction, any common view or joint operation with any degree of zeal or vigour."

However, the Marathas were still considered formidable, and it was not deemed advisable to cross blades with them. They had but recently inflicted a crushing defeat on the Nizam at Kardala, and this victory showed the capabilities of the Maratha chiefs

But the position of the Nizam was altogether a different one. It was also a pitiable one. The Nizams of Hydarabad had never been conspicuous for their valour in the field or statesmanship in the cabinet. These princes always furnished the rungs of the ladder by which the British rose to their ultimate supremacy in India. After the death of the first Nizam-ul-mulk, it was the struggle for the succession to the Nizamat which for the first time brought the French and the English into the arena of Indian politics. Again, the Nizam yielded the Circars to Cornwallis without any remonstrance or show of resistance. In the war with Tipu, the Nizam assisted the British.

Lord Mornington knew the weak position of the Nizam. He knew how he had been defeated by the Marathas. Major Kirkpatrick also made him acquainted while at the Cape of Good Hope with the actual condition of the Nizam's affairs. He wrote to Mr. Dundas :

"I have already observed how much the posture of the Nizam's affairs is altered with relation to the balance of power between him and the Maratha States, and how much it has been weakened and degraded by the Treaty of Khuradlah and by the manner in which it has been carried into execution."

He rightly grasped the situation of the Nizam when he wrote :

"At present the Court of Hyderabad seems willing to purchase a closer connection with us by great sacrifices, and if that connection should not appear objectionable on other grounds, it may probably take place on much more advantageous terms to us, if we grant it as a matter of favour to the solicitation of the Nizam, than if we commence the negotiation by demanding the dismission of any part of the Nizam's military establishment."

Knowing the Nizam's position Lord Mornington decided to bring his territory under the control of the Company. But it was the fear of Tipu which made the British deprive the Nizam of his independence and reduce him to the position of a feudatory.

Before we proceed to describe the methods which were adopted to reduce the Nizam, it is necessary to refer to the army of the native Powers of India at that time.

The natives of India have been always distinguished since time immemorial for their physical courage and truthfulness. They were no cowards. If they have been subdued by every rising Power of the world, it was not due to their inferiority in physique, or want of bravery, but mostly to their lack of military discipline, their disunion, want of weapons of precision and destruction and numerous other causes, among which perhaps their childlike simplicity might be mentioned as one. They were simple to the limit of their own disadvantage, and magnanimous to their enemies. Their possession

of these qualities perhaps accounts for the absence of patriotism among them. For patriotism, after all, implies selfishness and worldliness.

Of all the Christian nations who came out to India for the purpose of commerce, the French were the first to entertain the idea of the conquest of India. They also discovered the means of the conquest, because they mixed more freely with the natives of India than any other Christian nation.

To impart European discipline to their soldiers the principal native Powers of India had employed European military adventurers in their service. Hydar Ali was the first to set an example to others by entertaining French military officers in his employ to discipline troops. His example was followed by Sindia, Holkar and the Nizam. But this entertainment of European mercenaries was the fatal mistake which cost the native Powers their independence.

Although the French made this discovery for the conquest of India, they never made any serious attempt to found an Empire in India.

The French being out of the field, the English found no difficulty in subduing the Dutch and taking possession of their settlements in India and the East. Thus they were left the sole Christian nation in India to do just what they liked. They had no anxiety from any European Powers, because none existed in India. So they turned their attention to extending their possessions in India. Cornwallis led the way by unjustly attacking Tipu.

The entertainment of European military adventurers by the native Powers in India caused great anxiety to the Ministry in England, of which Pitt was the leader. Pitt thought this would stand in the way of his founding an Empire in India. So when Lord Mornington came out to India, he was instructed to particularly watch the armies of the native Powers.

Tipu, Sindhia and the Nizam had European adventurers in their employ. When Lord Mornington decided to go to war with Tipu, he thought it would be a precautionary measure if he could disband the corps of the Nizam officered by Europeans and especially Frenchmen. He knew that he could not bully Sindhia as easily as he could the Nizam. So the Nizam was the first to fall under his scheme of subsidiary alliance. These military adventurers were ready to commit any baseness for a sufficient pecuniary inducement. Had Lord Mornington chosen to corrupt them or buy them over, he would not have found any difficulty in doing so. It was one of the methods suggested to him by Major Kirkpatrick at the Cape. But this method would have cost money, which Lord Mornington was not inclined to spend.

The Resident at Hydarabad at this time was Major William Kirkpatrick's younger brother, named Captain James Achills Kirkpatrick. He was known at the Nizam's Court as Hashmat Jang, the Magnificent in Battle. He was remarkably clever for intriguing among the nobles and had so far reconciled himself to the customs and manners of the East that he solemnised a marriage contract with the daughter of one of the Muhammadan nobles of the Court at Hydarabad, in the *nikha* form known to Muhammadan Law.

This Captain J. A. Kirkpatrick was not free from those vices for which the

servants of the Company were notorious. The nobles of Hydarabad complained to Lord Mornington, levelling the charges of bribery, corruption and murder against Captain Kiikpatrick. Mir Alam, a former envoy of the Nizam to the Company, openly declared that Kirkpatrick had once vainly endeavoured to influence him with a bribe.* Of course, Lord Mornington was in duty bound to clear the character of the man who had rendered him valuable political services. But as the so-called 'honorable acquittal' of Warren Hastings by the noble peers who pronounced their verdict on his impeachment, does not prove that the first Governor-General of India was not guilty of the charges brought against him, so the whitewashing of Kirkpatrick's character by Lord Mornington is no evidence for any historian to believe that those charges were not genuine. The very fact that some nobles ventured to bring such charges against

* That Mir Alam should have at all ventured to bring such a charge against the Resident proves to demonstration that the Resident's conduct was not above suspicion. Mir Alam owed his position and very existence to the British; for him, therefore, to have complained against the British Resident shows that the latter's conduct was reprehensible. Mir Alam was the great-grandfather of the first Sir Salar Jang. Regarding the appointment of Mir Alam as the Nizam's minister after the death of Azim-ul-Umrah a certain Indian gentleman writes :

"High over all the rival candidates to wear the mantle of Azim-ul-Umrah towered Meer Allum. Great and varied were his services to his country......His unsullied character and his vast knowledge of affairs, his intimate familiarity based upon a thorough sympathy with the cardinal aims of the British Indian policy, all combined to afford him an equipment, rare in the circumstances of his age, for the high office of Minister.

"......Although at this time none else in Hyderabad possessed Meer Allum's qualifications, the Nizam was not over-anxious to obtain his services; *and his appointment was mainly due to the strong support of the British Residency.*

".....In a country like India, where British Indian subjects and subjects of the Native states are, in every respect but political, the component parts of the same social organisation, it becomes the obvious function of the suzerain power to educate those States into a capacity to accept and follow its own ideal of good government......

"This community of ideal can be realized in two ways: firstly, through the instrumentality of ministers appointed to administer the government of native States; secondly, by the direct exercise on the part of native Princes, of their power and authority on the lines laid down by the Paramount Power.

"In the commencement of the nineteenth century, when the supremacy of England was recognised by native Princes without an adequate conception of how that supremacy would qualify their right in the internal administration of their own States, it was the policy of British statesmanship to have that administration under the control of ministers whose elevation was the result, not of the choice of their own sovereigns, but of the influence of the Supreme Government.

".....It was therefore necessary at the period of time we have reached in the history of Hyderabad, that its Prime Minister should be a statesman who merited the confidence of the British Residency, even more than he had secured the respect of his own sovereign. Meer Allum made the nearest approach to that ideal of a Hyderabad Minister, which, in the early years of the nineteenth century, had been cherished by the British Government. To his appointment, the Nizam gave a reluctant consent."

Thus, then, it is evident from the circumstances narrated above regarding Mir Alam's elevation that he enjoyed the confidence of the British. For him therefore it was not possible to have made any complaint against the British Resident without good and strong grounds.

the Resident, whom they knew to be a great friend of the Governor-General, shows that these charges were not ill-founded.

Such was the character of the man whom Lord Mornington chose as his instrument for depriving the Nizam of his independence.

The Court of the Nizam was also corrupt. There was not at that time a single courtier at Hydarabad who could be called a statesman. Those who imagine that the sceptre of India passed out of the hands of the Muhammadans to the British, should remember the fact that the State which helped the British to gain the sceptre and, at a critical moment when the sceptre was about to fall from their hands, came to their rescue, was a Muhammadan one. That State was Hydarabad.

Knowing the nature of this State Lord Mornington wrote to the Resident, Captain J. A. Kirkpatrick, to displace the Nizam's corps officered by the French, by the Company's troops officered by the English. The letter is marked "Secret" and dated Fort William, 8th July, 1798. On the very same date, he wrote to the Resident at the Court of the Peshwa at Puna, making proposals similar to those in his letter to the Resident at Hydarabad. At Puna, the Resident did not meet with the success which crowned Kirkpatrick's proceedings at Hydarabad. For, although Nana Fadnavis was a prisoner, the Puna court was not so corrupt as that at Hydarabad. The reflection of Nana Fadnavis' splendid genius cast a borrowed light upon the Court which he had once warmed with his sunny radiance. Mornington's letter to Captain Kirkpatrick deserves more than ordinary attention. If the first Nizam-ul-mulk brought about the downfall of the Mughal Empire, the reigning Nizam of 1798 made the English the supreme Power in India. But this supremacy of the English was not a little due to the instrumentality of the Governor-General and the then Resident at Hydarabad.

Mornington's letter to Kirkpatrick shows the manner in which the Governor-General was desirous of accomplishing his object. He was conspiring against Tipu and to make the co spiracy a success, he did not stoop to consider the nature of the means he was adopting. In his letter to Kirkpatrick, Mornington presumes Tipu entertained hostile designs against the Company and therefore the Nizam's French officers and men should be dismissed. He took it for granted that the Nizam's French officers would join Tipu in the event of a war with Mysore. This was a preposterous and gratuitous presumption. The Nizam and the Peshwa as well as the East India Company had entered into an agreement in 1792, known as the Triple Alliance, by which all the contracting parties were bound to assist each other against the aggression of Tipu. No opportunity occurred to test the good faith of any one of the allies regarding this agreement, for Tipu never troubled any one since his defeat by Cornwallis.

It was against the Law of Nations to deprive any State of its independence in the manner which Mornington proposed. To fight and conquer foreign territory, without any just cause, although reprehensible, is a straightforward procedure compared to the crooked policy of Subsidiary Alliance of which the Irish Governor-General was the author. Again and again, this Governor-General, whom his biographer, a minister of the Christian faith, named Revd. W. H. Hutton, considers "the first ruler of India to stand forth decisively as a Christian," wrote in public and State documents that he was

"pursuing no schemes of conquest or extension of dominion, and entertaining no projects of ambition or aggrandizement." But was the project of the Subsidiary Alliance in keeping with this public assurance?

This scheme of 'Subsidiary Alliance' was the diplomatic snare invented by the genius of Lord Mornington on the suggestion of Major Kirkpatrick, late Resident at Hydarabad, to deprive Indians of their independence and extend the territories of the British in India. It is not easy to adequately describe the evil results which have befallen the simple and innocent native powers of India, who reposed unbounded confidence and trust in the Company, by "the Subsidiary Alliance" scheme. The author of this scheme meant nothing short of treachery by asking the independent States of India to adopt it.*

If the scheme in itself is so bad, the method by which it was forced on the State of Hydarabad was also dishonorable. The perusal of Lord Mornington's letter to Captain Kirkpatrick confirms the opinion. No one will give the credit to Lord Mornington of being "an honest thief." He enjoined the Resident at Hydarabad not to divulge the secret of the scheme to the Nizam, but to plot with his minister Azim-ul-Omra. "You will also urge to Azim-ul-Omra," wrote Lord Mornington to Captain Kirkpatrick, "the credit and honor which it would reflect on his administration if through his means the Nizam and the Peshwa should be enabled to derive reciprocal advantage and permanent security from a state of confusion which appeared to threaten their common ruin."

What was the object of Lord Mornington in thus withholding from the Nizam himself this scheme of the proposed Subsidiary Alliance? To our mind there is no doubt that Azim-ul-Umrah was in the pay of the servants of the Company and had been bribed to betray his master. It was no uncommon thing in the time of this "Christian" Governor-General to bribe ministers of the Native Powers of India. The Duke of Wellington, the brother of this "Christian" Governor-General, wrote to Major Shawe from his Camp at Toka, north of the Godavery, on the 24th August, 1803: "You will have observed from my letters to Colonel Close, *that I have urged him to pay the minister*, in order to have accurate information of what passes." The Duke of Wellington, at that time the Honorable Major-General Arthur Wellesley, would not have ventured to bribe the Peshwa's ministers, had there been no precedents for so doing. There is no legal evidence to show that Azim-ul-Umrah was receiving bribe from the British officials. But remembering the manner in which he helped them in carrying out their scheme of "Subsidiary Alliance," and also the fact that

* A certain European writing in the pages of the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for January, 1887 said: "The subsidiary system, however well it may have worked, was nothing more than a delusion; it was for the purpose of throwing dust into the eyes of the British public. It arose from the repeated orders of the home government to abstain from aggression.......

"To comply with the wishes of parliament was impossible, so a milder course was adopted. These countries were not ostensibly conquered; the sovereign was allowed to remain on his throne, with all the trappings of royalty, but substantial power was transferred from him to the person of a political agent. British conscience was therefore soothed by substituting for the name of conquest the milder term of annexation and the Company was satisfied to pocket the gains which accrued to without inquiring too carefully into the method of acquisition."

The simple-minded Asiatics could hardly understand this policy of subsidiary alliance.

the nobles of Hydarabad had levelled charges against Captain Kirkpatrick, there is every probability, amounting almost to certainty, that Azim-ul-Umrah was in the pay of the Resident.

Nizam-ul-Mulk, as minister of the Mughal Emperor, betrayed his master and thus precipitated the downfall of the Mughal Empire. The State which had been founded by usurpation, lost its independence, if not existence, by the treachery of its minister.

But to turn to Lord Mornington's letter. The Governor-General wrote to Captain Kirkpatrick:

"You will urge to Azim-ul-Omra in the strongest terms, the necessity of his taking every precaution to prevent the propositions for the dismission of the French party from transpiring; and you will suggest to him the propriety of dispersing the corps in small parties for the purpose of facilitating its final reduction, and of preventing the officers and privates from passing into the service of Tippoo or of Scindiah.

"Should Azim-ul-Omra consent, in the name of the Nizam, to the proposed conditions, you will then require the march of the troops from Fort St. George."

On the 15th July, 1798, Lord Mornington wrote to General Harris, who, in addition to his own duties as Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army, was at that time acting as Governor of Madras, as follows:

"My object is to restore the Nizam to some degree of efficiency and power. * The measure forms part of a much more extensive plan for the establishment of our alliances, previously to the moment when Tippoo may expect to be enabled to attack us. The whole of my arrangements will shortly be communicated to you; at present, I shall only recommend to you, in the most earnest manner, the speedy and effectual execution of the measure directed in the annexed despatch; as I know your honest zeal for the public service, and the activity which accompanies it, I look with confidence to the accomplishment of my anxious wish for the success of that part of my plan, which is now committed to your charge. I imagine, that the best position for assembling the troops destined for Hyderabad, would be in the Guntoor Circar..............I need not recommend the most strict attention to secrecy in the whole of this proceeding; the least intimation of my design would instantly set the whole French faction at Hyderabad in motion, and frustrate the whole of my views. It will be necessary to apprize the acting Resident at Hyderabad, of the intended station of the troops, in order that he may communicate with the commanding officer. I repeat my reliance on you for the expeditious and effectual performance of this service, of which the *importance in my estimation is so high, that in addition to my applause on public grounds, I* shall consider your cordial co-operation as a great claim on my private gratitude..............You will communicate the whole proceeding to the Residents at Poonah and Hyderabad for *their* information *only*, and not to be imparted to their respective courts."

From the above it is clear that he did not consider it necessary to discuss the propriety or otherwise of the scheme of Subsidiary Alliance with General Harris. He had no authority even from Parliament or the Court of Directors to adopt the method which he did in depriving the Nizam of his independence. He wished to do everything by *coup de main*; hence his solicitude in instructing General Harris not to impart the information regarding the dark scheme which he was hatching, to the Courts of Hydarabad and Puna. Knowing as he did, how easily he would succeed at Hydarabad

* This is the language of diplomacy, meaning in plain words that the Nizam should be deprived of his independence.

in depriving the Nizam of his independence, Lord Mornington, on the 18th July, 1798, wrote to Colonel William Palmer, the Resident at Hydarabad, in a letter marked "Private" :—"......that even the total failure of the negotiation at Poona will not prevent me from making an effort to recover the power and authority of the Nizam."

Captain Kirkpatrick at Hydarabad proved a very able lieutenant to Lord Mornington in his conspiracy. How far Azim-ul-Umrah himself approved of the scheme, we have no means of knowing. It is from Captain Kirkpatrick's letters only that we learn that the Minister of the Nizam had no objection to the proposed Subsidiary Alliance. Lord Mornington wrote on the 14th August, 1798, to Captain Kirkpatrick:

"Azim-ul-Omra's reception of my propositions has afforded me the highest satisfaction; nor could it be expected that he should pledge himself to a greater extent on the first communication of a plan embracing so many complicated interests.............The anxiety with which Azim-ul-Omra presses for the arrival of the additional subsidiary force from Fort St. George as an indispensable preliminary to the destruction of the French party, is a sufficient confirmation of the opinions which I had formed of the dangerous strength of that party, and of the absolute necessity of our interference for the purpose of restraining its overbearing influence.

"It could never have been expected by me that the Minister should take any other step towards the dismission of Perron's army previously to the arrival of our regiments, than that of dispersing the corps of which it is composed, so as to prevent their forming a junction either with a view of exciting a commotion in his Highness's dominions, or of retiring into the territories of any other power. It is indispensably necessary indeed that the intended dismission of the French party should be kept secret until the Minister shall possess the means of attempting it with a certainty of success ....The nature of these measures requires great despatch, the ordinary delays of an Asiatic Court would defeat the whole system."

General Harris, the Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army and Governor of the Madras Presidency, although quite in the dark regarding the purpose for which Lord Mornington had ordered him to assemble the troops at Guntoor Circar, obeyed the order without raising any objections. General Harris was a soldier and it would have been unbecoming on his part to question the propriety of Lord Mornington's order. But the members of the Madras Council were not to let the opportunity pass without a protest. General Harris paid no heed to their opposition. In his minute, dated "Secret Department, 31st July, 1798," he wrote:

"If I believed that the stipulated force was required only for the ordinary service of the Nizam, I would not hesitate to recommend that the execution of the order should be suspended until a reply was received to the representation which has been made to the supreme Government of our difficulties; but, judging from the very pressing private request of the Earl of Mornington, that the detachment may be equipped with the utmost promptitude and caution, that its formation is of great importance to the British interests in India, I should deem myself culpable if I thwarted any general plan which may have been formed by the supreme Government, by delaying, for a moment, to propose to the Board the mode which I deem most proper for the speedy and effectual accomplishment of the part with which we are charged."

For this service, Lord Mornington wrote to him on the 19th August, 1798:

"I am anxious to avail myself of the earliest opportunity to return you my most cordial thanks for the zeal and resolution with which you have carried my suggestions into effect; my letter of the 16th July will have informed you how a plan essential to the very existence of the British Empire in India would have been defeated if your honorable firmness had not overcome the suggestions of an

opposition which would have persuaded you to violate the law under the specious pretence of executing the spirit by disobeying the letter of the orders of the Governor-General in Council.

"This opposition I am resolved to crush; I possess sufficient power to do so; and will exert those powers to the extreme point of their extent, rather than suffer the smallest particle of my plans for the public service to be frustrated by such unworthy means. With this view my earnest request to you is, that you will communicate to me without delay the names of those who have arrogated to themselves the power of governing the empire committed to the charge. . . . . . The dismission of the French corps at Hydarabad will take place immediately after the arrival of our increased subsidiary force. . . . . . It is extremely necessary that you should not divulge this information, until I am enabled to transmit you a more exact state of our negotiations, which I will not fail to do by the first favourable opportunity."

The troops from Fort St. George were now on full march for Hydarabad. So a treaty was entered into with the Nizam. The treaty bore the date of 1st September, 1798. By this treaty, the Nizam signed the death-warrant of his independence. The very preamble of this treaty is a falsehood. It runs as follows :

"Whereas His Highness Nizam-ul-Mulk Asoph Jah Bahadur has, from the greatness of existing friendship, expressed a desire for an increase of the detachment of the Honourable Company's troops at present serving His Highness," &c.

This is not true, since the Nizam never expressed any desire for an increase of the Company's troops in his dominion. The fact is that the Company's troops were forced on His Highness by the Governor-General by means of fraud, combined with force. So the preamble of the treaty is not true.

Before the arrival of the Company's troops at Hydarabad, Captain Malcolm was appointed as Assistant to Captain Kirkpatrick. As he has played many parts as a soldier, diplomatist and administrator with great credit to himself and benefit to his compatriots, a short account of his early career will not be out of place here. He was, as his name indicates, a native of Scotland. His parents were poor and were not above that parsimony which characterises the Scotch people. So they could not afford to give their son any education worth speaking of. Through the interest of Mr. Pasley, a London merchant, brother of Mrs. Malcolm, a cadetship was procured for the boy, who was then not more than twelve years of age. When he was presented before the Court of Directors, to receive their consent to proceed to India, one of the Directors asked him, 'Why, my little man, what would you do if you were to meet Hyder Ali?' 'Do Sir!,' said the young aspirant, in prompt reply, 'I would out with my sword and cut off his head.' 'You will do,' was the rejoinder, 'let him pass.' So the matter ended.

He reached Madras in April, 1783. At that time he was not quite fourteen years old. He was doing duty with his regiment for some years and it was not till 1790 that he got a taste for soldiering in earnest. In that year, Lord Cornwallis went to war with Tipu, without a just cause or provocation, and the regiment to which Malcolm belonged took part in the campaign. During this campaign, Malcolm was brought into acquaintance with Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Græme Mercer, and others of the diplomatic corps, then representing British interests at the Court of Hydarabad. This was the turning-point of Malcolm's career. His ambition was fired and he resolved to distinguish

himself in the diplomatic line. He commenced the study of Persian and also the complicated questions of the relations of the East India Company with the native powers of India. But it was not till 1798 that his ambition was gratified by his getting an appointment in the Diplomatic service of India. In that year, Lord Mornington was appointed Governor-General of India; on his way to Calcutta, he stayed for a few days at Madras. Here Malcolm had an opportunity of making the acquaintance of the Governor-General and taking the liberty of presenting him with some of the papers he had written dealing with questions of Indian politics, and soliciting his Lordship that "when opportunity offered he might be employed in the diplomatic line of his profession." Lord Mornington was very favorably impressed with Malcolm, and appointed the latter as Assistant Resident at Hydarabad.

Captain Malcolm set out with all possible speed for Hydarabad and when he arrived there he was of great use to Captain Kirkpatrick in carrying out the scheme of the Governor-General. "Fortunately," writes Kaye in his Life of Malcolm, "it happened that at the critical moment the troops were mutinying against their officers, because they were in arrears of pay, and had made a prisoner of their French Commandant." Kaye does not say whether the troops had been instigated by the Resident and his Assistant to mutiny against their French Commandant. For it appears quite probable that the Resident (Captain Kirkpatrick) must have incited the troops against their commandant in order to facilitate the task which the Governor-General had entrusted him with.

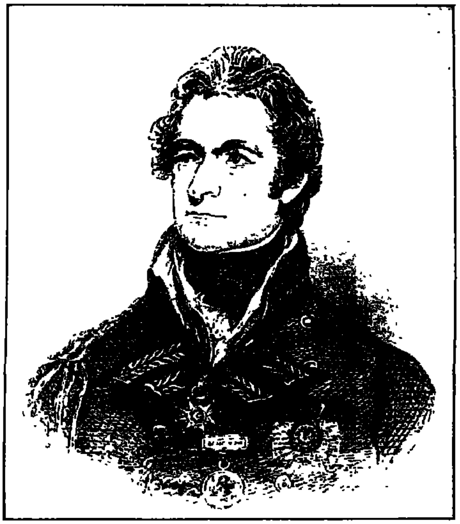
But the Resident and his Assistant triumphed over all the difficulties. When the Company's troops arrived at Hydarabad, the Nizam's Minister was, as it were, taken by surprise. He declined to disband the French corps, for such was the demand made to him by the Resident. It appears clear to us that there was some foul play in the transactions which the Resident carried on in getting the French corps disbanded. Perhaps the nature of the step which was forced on the Nizam's government, was not fully explained by the Resident. For, on no other supposition can we account for Ali Khan wavering at the eleventh hour on being brought face to face with so great a renunciation. Of course this has furnished a theme to some English writers to abuse and vilify Indian Courtiers. Kaye in speaking of the share of Malcolm in assisting Kirkpatrick in disbanding the French corps, writes :

"The lesson that he (Malcolm) learnt was never forgotten. That little reliance is to be placed on the word of an Indian diplomatist, that no native court is willing to fulfil the conditions of a treaty except under strong compulsion," &c., &c.

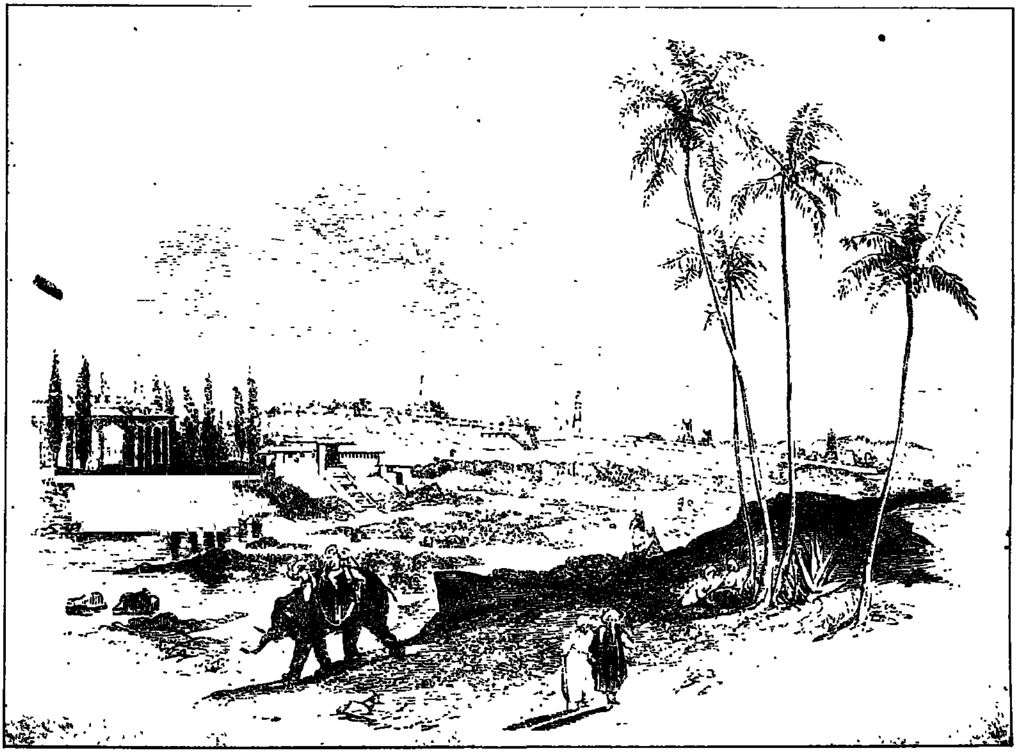
But the writer quoted above does not tell us what means were adopted by his compatriot, the Resident at Hydarabad, in forcing the Company's troops on the Nizam. It is a fact which even Kaye could not have denied that religion and morality with his countrymen in India were then at a low ebb. Respecting the treaty the English made with Jaffier Khan, Voltaire sarcastically remarked :

"We do not find that the English officers swore to this treaty on the Bible; perhaps they had

Wellington



Sir Thomas Monro



Seringapatam

Rev. J. Long wrote in the *Calcutta Review* for September, 1860 :

"We need not look for a high-toned morality in Calcutta a century ago, when we find such men as Drake, the Governor, and Clive bargaining with a traitor to sell his country, they themselves sharing in the spoil, while those dealers in treason and rebellion pocketed each some 20 lacs sterling. *Force and fraud were the morality of the day*..............What an example set to natives, when Clive, by counterfeiting or forging Admiral Watson's signature to a treaty, defrauded the merchant Omichand of £250,000. Omichand became insane, Clive was made a peer, though he committed the same crime for which Nuncomar was hanged by English law."

Lord Mornington and his agents at Hydarabad, at whose head was Captain Kirkpatrick, were no exceptions to the morality then prevailing among the Europeans in India. "Force and fraud" were their gospel, and it is more than probable that by "force and fraud" they succeeded in getting the Treaty signed by the Nizam on the 1st September, 1798, and installing the Company's troops at Hydarabad. But English writers are all silent on the point. On the contrary, they blame the duped Ali Khan for wavering at the eleventh hour in disbanding the French corps. The French corps had served the Nizam with great fidelity; to this even the biographer of Sir John Malcolm has borne testimony. We fail to understand why the Nizam should have been so ungrateful as to disband the French corps. Does it not seem clear that Kirkpatrick conspired and plotted against the independence of the Nizam by making him sign the Treaty of the 1st September, 1798 ?

Mrs. Graham, in writing of the Peshwa in 1808, said that he was a prisoner and he paid for the guards who kept him a prisoner. Her own words are :

"The present Peishwa is the son of Raghoba, whom the victories and intrigues of the English have placed on the Musnud, and have reduced to a state little more enviable than that of the prisoner Rajah at Satara, who is the grandson of Sivajee. The Peishwa still keeps up the farce of going to Satara to receive the insignia of his office from the hand of the Raja, but is himself so completely under our dominion, that *he pays a subsidy to maintain the three thousand troops which surround his capital and keep him a prisoner.*'"*

The above applies with greater force to the Nizam. He was the first Indian Prince who was ensnared by Lord Mornington and made to pay for men who kept him a prisoner. The methods which Lord Mornington employed for depriving the Nizam of his independence very closely resemble those of Cortes and Pizzaro in their dealings with Montezuma and the unfortunate Inca, Atahualpa. But Lord Mornington and his agents, Captains Kirkpatrick and Malcolm, met with rewards which were denied to Cortes and Pizzaro for their vile deeds.

Lord Mornington's triumph in making the Nizam sign the treaty of 1st November, 1798, by which he was to receive a subsidiary force of six thousand sepoys with artillery officered by British subjects, to be paid out of his treasury, and the whole of the officers of the French force were to be dismissed and no Frenchman was in future to be employed by the Nizam, nor any other European without the Company's permission, was cordially approved by Pitt's ministry.

In the Council Chamber at Calcutta, the portrait of Lord Mornington, painted by

* Pages 84 and 85, Journal of a residence in India, by Maria Graham, 1813.

the celebrated artist Robert Home, shows the Governor-General resting his hand on a parchment scroll inscribed, "Subsidiary Treaty, Hydarabad, 1798."* The Britishers ought to be grateful to Lord Mornington, for his scheme of the 'Subsidiary Alliance' was the thin end of the wedge introduced for destroying the independence of the native powers of India and extending the influence of, and acquiring territories by, their compatriots in India.

Captain Kirkpatrick was also amply rewarded for the part he played in this transaction. He was made the Governor-General's Honorary Aide-de-Camp, which was a remarkable distinction, as he was the first person on whom this honor was bestowed. Subsequently when several charges of corruption, bribery and murder were levelled against Captain Kirkpatrick, Lord Mornington turned a deaf ear to these charges and 'honorably' acquitted him.

Captain Malcolm was also not forgotten. He was ordered by the Governor-General to proceed to Calcutta, which he did, bearing with him the colors of the disbanded French regiments. Kaye writes :

"At the capital he (Malcolm) was warmly welcomed. The Governor-General—no mean judge of character—saw at once that he was a man to be trusted and to be employed. In truth, this meeting with Lord Wellesley was the turning-point of John Malcolm's career. From that day his future was made. He found in the Governor-General a statesman after his own heart ; and Lord Wellesley listened attentively to all that was said by the political assistant, because he found in John Malcolm's ready words fit and forcible expression of the opinions which were taking shape in his mind."†

So every one was rewarded at the expense of the Nizam.

* He was also voted an annuity of £5000 for a term of twenty years by the Court of Directors ; and the payment was ordered to date from 1st September 1798, the day on which the Nizam was made to sign the Treaty by which he was robbed of his independence and a large portion of his dominion.

† *Lives of Indian Officers*, Vol. I, p. 1[illegible]

CHAPTER XVII

THE SECOND WAR WITH TIPU.

If the first war with Tipu was unjust, the war which Lord Mornington declared against him was a great crime. Except in the imagination of Lord Mornington, there was no *causus belli* to go to war with that unfortunate prince.* Reading over the despatches of Lord Mornington, it appears clear that he had made up his mind to go to war with Tipu, long before he set his foot on Indian soil. How far he was influenced in this determination by Lord Cornwallis, it is impossible to say. But his intimate friendship with Cornwallis and the high estimate which the latter entertained of him, makes one suspect that Cornwallis had some share in Lord Mornington's making up his mind to go to war with Tipu. It will be remembered that Cornwallis wanted to altogether crush Tipu and with this object in view, he did not accept the negotiations for peace which Tipu tried to open, and he even was about to lay siege to Seringapatam. It was the earnest appeal of the Marathas which prevented Cornwallis from accomplishing his desire. But he had broken the back of Tipu. It was impossible for that prince to rise again or extend the boundaries of his contracted dominion.†

* Sir Thomas Munro hated Tipu like poison. In his letter of 21st September 1796, he wrote to his father :

"The unity of our Government and our great military force give us such a superiority over the native princes, that we might, by watching opportunities, extend our dominion without much danger or expense, and at no very distant period, over a great part of the Peninsula. Our first care ought to be directed to the total subversion of Tipoo. After becoming master of Seringapatam we should find no great difficulty in advancing to the Kistna, when favoured by wars or revolutions in the neighbouring States. But we ought to have some preconcerted general scheme to follow upon such occasions." (Gleig's *Life of Munro*, vol. I, p. 203.)

† Regarding Lord Mornington, Lord Cornwallis thus wrote to Sir George Barlow, the Acting Governor-General of India, on the departure of Sir John Shore for England :

"Lord Mornington, your new Governor-General, is a man of very considerable abilities, and most excellent character. I have known him from his childhood, and have always lived on the most friendly habits with him........*Having assured you that Lord Mornington thinks exactly as I do both about India* and yourself, I have only to add my sincere good wishes for your health and prosperity."

From the words italicised in the above extract does it not appear clear that Lord Cornwallis commissioned his intimate friend Lord Mornington to complete what he had left unfinished, namely, the subjugation of Tipu, for it was he (Cornwallis) who considered the existence of that Muhammadan Prince as a great danger to the British supremacy in India ? Colonel Beatson in his "View of the origin and conduct of the war with Tipu Sultan," writes :— "The victories of the Marquis Cornwallis had greatly facilitated any future plan of operation against the power of Tipu Sultan. By diminishing his resources, and increasing *our own*, they had produced a two-fold effect. And the extension of our frontier, by the addition of the Barramaul and Salem Districts, and a

In his first letter to Mr. Dundas from the Cape of Good Hope, dated 23th February 1798, Lord Mornington expressed his hostile intentions against Tipu. Of course, he was suffering from Francophobia.

From the very day of his assuming charge of office as Governor-General of India, he commenced plotting to ruin Tipu. British historians of India, with the exception of James Mill, blinded by their prejudices, have not done justice to Tipu. That prince has been described as cruel, and a tyrant. But these charges against Tipu are not substantiated by his conduct and system of government. Even Captain (afterwards Sir John) Malcolm, who as a firebrand always preferred war to peace, for every war brought him distinctions and honors, was obliged to admit that Tipu was a sagacious ruler.*

Such was the Prince whom the English had painted in the blackest color possible. Tipu's greatest faults were that he was a brave soldier and a successful administrator. Therefore he was a thorn in the side of the British. Tipu styled them 'the most faithless and usurping of mankind.'

The allegations against Tipu were that he was conspiring with the French to wage war against the English. Tipu was an independent sovereign and his State constituted what in modern times would be called an "International State." He had perfect liberty to solicit the aid of France in his difficulties. In modern times all the Christian States of Europe are armed to the teeth, and make secret treaties and covert overtures against other States. But that does not justify any state to go to war against another, unless hostilities are openly declared. Judging by their standard, even supposing that Tipu entertained hostile intentions against the English, that was no justification for the latter to go to war with him.

We have not to judge any sovereign and any international state by their intentions or political prejudices, but should see whether they are in a position to carry out their intentions and prejudices into actual execution. The mere expression of a threat by a sovereign is no justification for any power to declare hostilities against him. If this were to constitute a *causus belli*, there would be no peace in this world. In Christendom, to-day, there is not a single Power which does not cherish hostile intentions, and sometimes even make use of threatening language, against a neighbouring Christian State. But this is not considered enough for a declaration of war.

Let us consider the allegations made against Tipu and see whether these constituted enough justification for war with him. The story is not a very long one. On the 9th June, 1798, Lord Mornington forwarded to General Harris, who was at that time Acting Governor of Madras, a document alleged to have been published at the Mauritius. In forwarding this to General Harris, Lord Mornington wrote:

thorough knowledge of the defences of Seringapatam and of the routes leading to that city, were considered at that moment an inestimable advantage."

It is not improbable that Lord Cornwallis had impressed on Lord Mornington the ease with which Tipu's dominion could be invaded. It is, therefore, that we find Tipu the first object of his (Mornington's) eager attention. Just as a cat watches the rat, so was this Christian Governor-General watching the Muhammadan Prince.

* Wellesley's Dispatches, Vol. I. Appendix, pp. 668-669.

"Although I imagine that the enclosed Proclamation must have reached you, I think it most advisable to transmit a copy of it to you. There seems to be so little doubt that the Proclamation really was published at the Mauritius, that it must become a matter of serious discussion between this Government and Tippoo. How such a discussion may terminate it is utterly impossible to say. Perhaps the result of this may be to prove that M. Malartic has exaggerated, or wholly misrepresented the intentions of Tippoo; but on the other hand, if Tippoo should choose to avow the objects of his embassy to have been such as are described in the Proclamation, the consequences may be very serious, and may ultimately involve us in the calamity of war. I wish you to be apprised of my apprehensions on this subject, and to prepare your mind for the possible event. You will, therefore, turn your attention to the means of collecting a force, if necessity should unfortunately require it; but it is not my desire that you should proceed to take any public steps towards the assembling of the army before you receive some further intimation from me."

It will be observed from the above letter that the Governor-General wanted to make the Proclamation a subject "of serious discussion" with Tipu. But unfortunately he never did so. He assembled the troops, and, as will be related further on, went himself to Madras to demand satisfaetion from Tipu without giving him a chance to explain the allegations and rumours that had been circulated against him. The Governor-General himself did not entertain peaceful intentions towards Tipu. *

Without ascertaining the views of the allies on the subject, he presumed that they were not in a position to render him any help. He argued that the Nizam's army being chiefly officered by the French would not fight against Tipu. But it was convenient for him to forget that the same army had six years previously taken the field against the latter. Against every received principle of the law of nations, he forced the Company's troops on the Nizam under the euphemistic words "subsidiary alliance." In his heart of hearts Lord Mornington was certain that he had no justification for declaring war against Tipu and therefore he was afraid of "calling upon the allies." He knew that they would not combine with him in an unrighteous war and therefore he conspired to deprive them of their independence. This appeared to be a preliminary measure necessary before "striking a sudden blow against Tipu." We have already described the manner in which the Nizam was reduced to the wretched position of "a prisoner."

But the Peshwa was not to be so easily made "a prisoner." Either the Resident at Puna lacked the scheming and intriguing propensities of Captain Kirkpatrick or the Peshwa's ministers were not to be so easily seduced as to betray their master and their national independence: anyhow at Puna, Lord Mornington's conspiracy did not succeed. The Peshwa being one of their allies whom the British had solemnly promised to help against his enemies was suffered to be bullied by Sindia. The English did not come to his rescue. They did not attack the Sindia's territory for the threatening attitude which he had assumed towards the Peshwa. Lord Cornwallis found a pretext to go to war with Tipu, because it was alleged that the latter meditated attacking the Travancore Raja, who was an ally of the Company of Christian Merchants. But Sindhia who was actually in the dominion of the Peshwa, was not coerced by the British. The latter had received more help from the Peshwa than from the Travancore

* See his letter to General Harris, dated 20th June, 1798.

Raja, and had they any sense of gratitude they would have, as in honor bound, helped the Peshwa. But they wanted to weaken the Peshwa. The Peshwa's ministers knew that the war which the English were going to declare against Tipu was an unjust one. Nana Fadnavis, who had been once more allowed to wield the ministerial sceptre of the Maratha Empire, was not the man to help the British in their unjust and aggressive war. Besides, it was not his policy to crush Tipu. It was the Marathas who dissuaded Cornwallis from annihilating Tipu. So Lord Mornington did not "call upon the allies." He made the Nizam "a prisoner" and left the Peshwa to the tender mercies of Sindia. He found his opportunity now "to strike a sudden blow against Tipu."

The Frankophobist Governor-General was fully resolved on the war and, as with the wolf in the fable, the allegation of the French intrigue served as the pretext of the muddied stream to "devour" Tipu. He paid no attention to the representations of the Madras Government.

The Memorandum which Mr. Josias Webbe, Secretary to the Government of Madras, wrote on the 6th July, 1798, on the possibility of an early rupture with Tipu Sultan, displays views of real statesmanship. He wrote:

"Whatever may be the object of Tipoo's embassy to the Mauritius, or whatever may be the event of it in Europe, the late intelligence from the islands, which leaves us no room to doubt that the military have been sent to France, and the French marine dispersed, satisfies me that no immediate co-operation can take place; and consequently, that no rupture is to be apprehended but by our own provocation."

But all these words of wisdom and justice were thrown away on the Governor-General like so much water on the duck's back. That man had no sense of right and wrong left in him. To talk of justice to him was like preaching morality to a horde of robbers while they are dividing their booty.

While the Governor-General was thus conspiring against Tipu, it is necessary to turn to that Muhammadan Prince and ascertain if he had any intention of violating the terms of the Treaty of 1792. On the 26th April, 1798, a letter from Tipu was received at Fort William addressed to Sir John Shore. In it that Muhammadan Prince wrote:

"I have been favored with your letter, notifying your intention of returning to Europe, and the nomination of Lord Mornington, who is of rank, to the office of Governor-General, in whom the same disposition would be manifested with yourself to cultivate and improve the friendship and good understanding subsisting between the two states, and an inviolable adherence to the engagements by which they are connected. It is very well; you must impress Lord Mornington with a sense of the friendship and unanimity so firmly subsisting between us, and constantly favor me with letters communicating your health and welfare. . . . ."

"Believing my friendly heart disposed to pay every regard to truth and justice, and to strengthen the foundations of harmony and concord established between the two states, I hope you will always gratify me by letters notifying your welfare."

To Lord Mornington also the Muhammadan Prince addressed a letter received at Calcutta on the 10th July, 1798. In it he wrote:

"Your Lordship's friendly letter containing the agreeable intelligence of your arrival at Calcutta, and your taking charge of the Company's affairs, reached me at the happiest of times, and afforded me a degree of pleasure and satisfaction that cannot be adequately expressed upon paper. May the

Almighty prosper to your Lordship this event! By the divine grace, the exalted fabric of union and attachment, and the firm foundations of friendship and harmony bewteen the two states, are in full strength. To adhere to the obligations of existing treaties is a constant object with me. Your Lordship is from your heart a friend and well-wisher, and I am confident will hold in mind the observance of union and concord."

The English lay the charge of duplicity, prevarication and falsehood at the door of Tipu; they say that that Muhammadan Prince was intriguing with the French and was at the same time making protestations of friendship to the English. It is problematical and not quite proved that Tipu's conduct savoured of duplicity. But the fact is, about which there can be no question, that the Governor-General and the British generallv were double-faced lying men. For while they were conspiring against Tipu, they humored that Prince by their protestations of friendship and kind regards.

Colonel Gurwood, who edited Wellington's Despatches, the 1st edition of which was published in 1834, wrote:

"Some of the publications, ...have ascribed to the Indian Government at home, and to the new Governor-General (Lord Mornington), an inclination to take advantage of any pretext for reducing the power of Tipoo Sultaun: and for removing from India the French officers in the service of the native princes. This assumption is directly at variance with the general tenor of public records. On the contrary, it appears that one of the first acts of the new Governor-General was to address a conciliatory letter to Tipoo Sultan, dated 14th of June 1798, in reply to an application received by Sir John Shore at the moment of his departure claiming restitution of Wynaad."*

It appears clear that Colonel Gurwood was not aware of the public despatches of Lord Mornington, for that Governor-General wrote to General Harris on the 9th June, 1798, that is, five days previous to his so-called "conciliatory letter" to Tipu, to assemble troops. This "conciliatory letter" is an instance of duplicity.

Lord Mornington played his part of duplicity extremely well. He appointed a Commission to investigate Tipu's claims and upon the Commission making a report in favor of Tipu Wynaad was restored to him.

The Governor-General was biding his time. Had he been a straightforward and honest man he would not have adopted the double-dealing procedure towards Tipu. Instead of appointing a Commission to investigate Tipu's claims and restoring to him Wynaad, and thus making the world believe that he had no hostile intentions against Tipu, he should have taken that Prince to task for his alleged intrigues with the French. But a straightforward policy would not have served his purpose. So while he was humoring that Prince he was devising means to cut his throat. When al' his preparations were complete, then he threw off the disguise and shewed himself in his true colors.

On the other hand, Tipu's communications to the Governor-General never contained anything which suggested the least suspicion of his hostile intentions. On 28th September, 1798, Lord Mornington received a letter from Tipu, in which that Muhammadan Prince wrote that

"Mischief-makers, by starting empty disputes and altercations, hope to accomplish their own purposes, but by the favor of God, the fountains of union and harmony between the two States possess too much purity and clearness to be sullied by the devices of self-interested persons."

* Wellington's Despatches (1st Edition), Vol. I, p. 34.

Poor Tipu was soon to be disillusioned. He, in his pure Oriental simplicity, had no idea of the measures which the Irish Governor-General was pursuing for his destruction. Although Lord Mornington received Tipu's letter on the 28th September, 1798, he did not condescend to reply to it till November of that year. In the meanwhile, he had succeeded in making the Nizam "a prisoner." There was also at that time no longer any fear of invasion of India by the French. In October, 1798, Lord Mornington wrote to the Chairman of the East India Company:

"I trust that Tippoo will not venture to move without having obtained a more effectual succour from the French than they have yet afforded to him; and I am equally confident that the vigilance of our Government at home, and of our fleets, will oppose every possible obstacle to the approach of the French towards this quarter of the globe. *But I still feel the necessity of active and early preparation for war.*"

Where was the necessity of active and early preparation for war, when he knew that the French had been defeated and that Nelson had totally annihilated the Toulon fleet? We find the Governor-General writing to Tipu on the 4th November, 1798, on the signal victory achieved by Nelson.

The Governor-General had not yet taken off his mask. He was playing the hypocrite. On the 8th November, 1798, he thought the time had come to show himself in his true colors. He assumed an insolent tone towards Tipu. He wrote to that Muhammadan Prince:

"It is impossible that you should suppose me to be ignorant of the intercourse which subsists between you and the French, whom you know to be the inveterate enemies of the Company, and to be now engaged in an unjust war with the British nation. You cannot imagine me to be indifferent to the transactions which have passed between you and the enemies of my conntry," etc.

How are we to reconcile this with the sentiments expressed by the same Christian writer in his letter of the 4th November, 1798, in which he communicated the news of the disaster that had befallen the French in Egypt? This is a puzzle which the British alone can solve.

He also threatened Tipu with the deputation of a British officer to his Court to demand from him such districts as would appear to the Governor-General and his non-Christian allies effectual for the maintenance of peace. The officer selected for this purpose was Major Doveton.

But before he could have expected any reply from Tipu, Lord Mornington not only prepared the troops, but ordered the Indian Navy to be in readiness to swoop down on Tipu's territories at a moment's notice.

Those who try to justify the Governor-General's attack on Tipu on the supposition that the French would have invaded India, had that Muhammadan Prince been left alone, can hardly adduce any arguments convincing to any intelligent man that at the time when Lord Mornington was bullying Tipu, the French were in a position to carry out the scheme with which they were credited, that is, of the invasion of India. The fear of the French was no reason for any unjust attack on any Indian sovereign.

Lord Mornington now left Calcutta for Madras to be near the scene of action. He arrived at Madras on the 31st December, 1798. On his arrival he received Tipu's

The Storming of Seringapatam

reply to his insolent letter of the 8th November. That Muhammadan Prince wrote his reply in courteous and at the same time dignified language. It is necessary to make extracts from this letter to show his view of the case.

Regarding the so-called embassy of his to the Mauritius and the Proclamation of the French Governor of that island, which had served as handles to the British for justifying their war with Tipu, that Muhammadan Prince wrote:

"In this Sircar (the gift of God) there is a mercantile tribe, who employ themselves in trading by sea and land. Their agents purchased a two-masted vessel, and having loaded her with rice, departed with a view to traffic. It happened that she went to the Mauritius, from where forty persons, French, and of a dark colour, of whom ten or twelve were artificers, and the rest servants paying the hire of the ship, came here in search of employment. Such as chose to take service were entertained, and the remainder departed beyond the confines of this Sircar (the gift of God); and the French, who are full of vice and deceit, have perhaps taken advantage of the departure of the ship to put about reports with the view to ruffle the minds of both Sircars.

"It is the wish of my heart, and my constant endeavour, to observe and maintain the articles of the agreement of peace, and to perpetuate and strengthen the basis of friendship and union with the Sircar of the Company Bahadur. . . . And I am resident at home, at times taking the air, and at others amusing myself with hunting. . . . In this case, the allusion to war in your friendly letter, and the following passage, namely, that prudence required that both the Company and their allies should adopt certain measures of precaution 'and self-defence' have given me the greatest surprise."*

Regarding the deputation of Major Doveton with which the Governor-General had threatened him, Tipu wrote:

"It has been understood, by the blessing of the Almighty, at the conclusion of the peace, the treaties and engagements entered into among the four Sircars were so firmly established and confirmed as ever to remain fixed and durable; . . . . and be an example to the rulers of the age; nor are they, nor will they ever be liable to interruption. I cannot imagine that means more effectual than these can be adopted, for giving stability to the foundation of friendship and harmony, promoting the security of states, or the welfare and advantage of all parties."†

Those who charge Tipu with duplicity should remember that that Prince was an orthodox Muhammadan and a religious man. Christians *may* take the name of God in vain, but such is never the case with strict and orthodox Muhammadans. When Tipu, swearing on God, declared that he had no hostile intentions against the British, that was sufficient guarantee of his good faith. No further security could be exacted from an orthodox Mussalman.§

* Wellesley's Dispatches, Vol. I, p. 382.

† *Ibid.*, p. 383.

§ James Mill writes:—"Another feature in the character of Tipoo was his religion, with a sense of which his mind was most deeply impressed. He spent a considerable part of every day in prayer. He gave to his kingdom, or state, a particular religious title, *Khodadad*, or God-given: and he lived under a peculiarly strong and operative conviction of the superintendence of a Divine Providence. His confidence in the protection of God was, indeed, one of his snares; for he relied upon it to the *neglect of other means of safety.*"

To charge such a God-fearing man with duplicity, prevarication and falsehood, is, to say the least, ungenerous. Does it not remind one of the saying of Schopenhauer: "it is generally the old story of the dog barking at its own image; it is himself that he sees and not another dog as he fancies."

But the Christian Governor-General was not satisfied with this. On the 9th January, 1799, that is after receiving and considering the contents of Tipu's letter for over nine days, Lord Mornington wrote a long letter to Tipu. In this letter the Governor-General recapitulated Tipu's conduct and was so unreasonable as to demand an answer within twenty-four hours after its receipt by Tipu. For wrote the Christian noble in concluding the letter :

"I most earnestly request that your reply may not be deferred for more than one day after this letter shall reach your presence ; dangerous consequences result from the delay of arduous affairs."*

It was an ultimatum to Tipu. The Christian Governor-General had not even the decency to allow sufficient time to the Muhammadan Prince to consider the contents of his long letter. However, with his consummate hypocrisy, to show to the world that his intentions were pacific, the Governor-General wrote another long letter to Tipu on the 16th January, 1799. With this communication, he forwarded to Tipu the Sublime Porte's letter .

These letters must have awakened painful feelings in the breast of Tipu. His father had once shown mercy to the British when they sued for peace. Had Hydar been hard on the fallen foes, his son would not have been subjected to such bitter humiliation as Tipu was at this time. It is, among other causes, the spirit of kindness to their enemies which has brought on the ruin of the Asiatics. Even Tipu had at one time held in the hollow of his hand those English who subsequently blackened his character and involved him in miseries and disasters which ended in his death.

The proud spirit of Tipu would not yield to the coercion of the Governor-General. Surrounded on all sides, both on sea and land, by the British enemies, he tried his best to fight the troops led by their Christian officers. He did not reply to the Governor-General's threatening letter within the stipulated period. So on the 3rd February, 1799, the Governor-General issued orders to the British armies to march on the territories of Tipu. Resistance for Tipu was almost hopeless. He was not prepared for the war and had no resources to successfully withstand the overwhelming force that had been brought against him. So, on the 13th February, 1799, he wrote to the Governorr General to despatch Major Doveton. But the Governor-General considered Tipu's proposals for peace as insulting to the might and majesty of the Power of which he was the representative. On the 22nd February, 1799, he formally declared war against Tipu. General Harris was placed in supreme command of all the troops.

General Harris was instructed to seduce the subjects of Tipu ; for the Governor-General wrote to him :

"I have reason to believe that many of the tributaries, principal officers, and other subjects of Tipoo Sultan, are inclined to throw off the authority of that Prince, and to place themselves under the protection of the Company and of our allies. The war in which we are again involved by the treachery and violence of the Sultan, renders it both just and expedient that we should avail ourselves, as much as possible, of the discontents and disaffection of his people."†

* *Ibid.*, p. 400.

† *Loc. Cit.*, p. 442.

How very edifying for a highly professing Christian to write this! Lord Mornington, as a model Christian, was in the habit of daily praying to God, "Lead us not into temptations." But he considered it quite consistent with his religious faith to lead others into temptations. For this nefarious business, he appointed a regular commission. He wrote to General Harris :

"Being apprehensive that your more important avocations will not admit of your taking any part in the details of this business, I hereby direct you to constitute a commission of this purpose, to consist of the Honourable Colonel Wellesley, Lieutenant-Colonel Close, Lieutenant-Colonel Agnew, and Captain Malcolm, assistant to the Resident at Hyderabad, with Captain Macaulay, to act as Secretary to the Commission."*

So it was not by means of arms alone that victory was obtained over Tipu, but the British encouraged his subjects to betray him. This accounts for the ease with which Tipu was crushed. There are reasons to believe that Lord Cornwallis's success in his first war with Tipu was also achieved by means of foul play. The following letter from Lord Clive, the Governor of Madras, leaves no room for doubt that in the First Mysore War in which at first General Meadows was appointed in chief command of the forces which operated against Tipu, there was treachery in the camp of that Muhammadan Prince. The letter is dated Fort St. George, 29th Nov., 1798, and it runs as follows :

"I have the honor to transmit for your perusal a paper of intelligence, on the correctness of which, as far as it goes, I believe you may with confidence rely. It comes through the channel of a friend of the family of the former king of Mysore *who had communication and engagements* with Lord Pigot, Lord Macartney, and Sir William Meadows I believe, and whose information during the periods of their governments was found to be of importance, and invariably to be depended upon. This person, Tremal Row, keeps up a connection with the old Queen of Mysore, who is confined by Tipu, and whose only hopes of the restoration of the family arise from the prospect of a war. Upon this unfortunate Lady's views and wishes, I expect very soon to be able to send your Lordship a paper, which in that event may become a subject of your consideration. Tremal Row is also connected with some persons immediately employed in the Sultan's Government,. . . . †

So the conspiracy was formed with the Ex-Queen and principal inhabitants of Mysore against Tipu. There is no reason to believe that Tipu's government was tyrannical and oppressive. It should be remembered that his subjects were not disarmed. Had there been any misgovernment the people would have revolted against him, but this they never did. But now they were temped to revolt against Tipu. The members of the Commission appointed by the Governor-General, smothered their conscience and in right earnest set to work to corrupt Tipu's subjects.

The troops were now on full march towards Tipu's capital. In a secret letter to General Harris, dated Fort St. George, 22nd February, 1799, the Governor-General furnished him with instructions regarding the steps he should take should Tipu send an embassy with the object of opening negotiations for peace. The General was enjoined to vigorously prosecute his advance on Seringapatam; for in Lord Mornington's opinion,

* *Ibid.*

† *Ibid.*, p. 361.

"obtaining possession of that City would open so extensive and complicated a change in the political state of India, as to require the most comprehensive system of new arrangements."

General Harris was a soldier. Such a man is not the one to prefer peace to the honors and glories of war. Tipu wrote several times to him to appoint proper persons for conducting a conference and renewing the business of a treaty. But he was determined not to negotiate with Tipu. The rumored hoarded treasure of Tipu tempted him to push on and crush him. This he did. On the 4th May, 1799, Tipu's palace was entered and that Prince met the glorious death of a valiant soldier with the sword in his hand. The religious tenets of the Hindu as well as of Muhammadans assign a prominent place in Heaven to those brave soldiers who never flinch from their duties but die fighting. *

That he was the victim of foul conspiracy, that the British entertained no kind feelings towards him, for they were jealous of his power and ability, no one who reads the contemporary records will fail to notice. Even the Chief Justice of Bengal, Sir John Anstruther, from whom at least the public would expect dispassionate views on the burning political questions of the day, was as great a fire-eater as the youngest subaltern of the lines. In a letter dated Calcutta 27th March, 1799, this man wrote to Lord Mornington:

"I am not sure that I have made up my mind to wish submission on the part of Tipu without some action which shall disperse or destroy part of his army, and tarnish his military reputation. A treaty following a battle operates more powerfully upon the mind than one which leaves the army entire."

Again, when the news of Tipu's death reached Calcutta, the same judge wrote to the Governor-General on the 17th May, 1799:

"It is with the most sincere satisfaction and heartfelt pleasure that I congratulate you upon the most brilliant and glorious event which ever occurred in our Indian history."

Tipu's death was commemorated by the British by thanks-offerings in their churches. Revd. Hutton, in his biographical sketch of the Marquess Wellesley, writes that the Governor General

* Regarding the circumstances leading to the death of Tipu Sultan, see Colonel Mile's *Tipu Sultaun* (Panini Office edition, pp. 179 *et seq.* as well as the Appendix, pp. 208-209).

After the fall of Seringapatam excesses were committed on the helpless inhabitants of that unfortunate place, compared to which Tipu's alleged cruelties dwindle into insignificance. The authors of these excesses were mostly British soldiers. Colonel the Hon'ble Arthur Wellesley wrote to General Harris on the day following that of the capture of Seringapatam:—"I wish you would send the provost here, and put him under my orders. Until some of the plunderers are hanged, it is vain to expect to stop the plunder."

Again, he wrote:—"Until the provost executed three or four people, it is impossible to expect order or indeed safety. There are at this moment, sepoys and soldiers belonging to every regiment in your camp and General Stuart's in the town. . . . . . It only increases the confusion and the terror of the inhabitants. Till both subside in some degree, we cannot expect that they will return to their habitations."

It should be remembered that these poor inhabitants had been assured by the Governor-General's Proclamation that their lives and properties would be respected by the troops under the Chief Command of General Harris. It was in this manner by plundering the people that the terms of the proclamation were given effect to by the invading army!

The Last Stand of Tippoo Sultan

"marked the conquest of Mysore by a day of solemn thanksgiving. On February 6, 1800, the Governor-General, the chief Justice, the Commander-in-Chief (Sir Alured Clarke), the members of Council, the Judges, and the public officers, civil and military, proceeded on foot to the New Church at Calcutta. The Streets were lined with troops, and royal salutes were fired during the procession and at the *Te Deum*. It was the first occasion on which any national recognition of Religion had taken place; and it was marked by all the pomp and solemn dignity which the Governor-General could give it."

Every European servant of the Company who participated in this transaction received his reward. The Governor-General received a step in rank and became henceforth known as the Marquess of Wellesley. Moreover, he was made Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief of all the forces in the East Indies.

General Harris now received a peerage. He was the son of a poor parson. As he himself wrote to the Governor-General on the 27th June, 1799 :

"An humble clergyman's son, thrown very early in life into the army, entirely a soldier of fortune, with scarcely any assistance save his own exertions, is little likely to have any hereditary place he would chuse to commemorate."

This son of an humble clergyman had the vanity of soliciting the grant of the dignity of a peerage. His promptness in attacking Tipu and not negotiating with him for peace is to be explained by the fact that had peace been concluded with that Prince, he (General Harris) would not have had any share in that prize money which raised him from the low position of being the penniless "son of an humble clergyman" to the proud distinction of General Lord Harris of Seringapatam.

The Hon'ble Arthur Wellesley's career and fortune were made at Seringapatam. It was here that he learnt those lessons in duplicity (commonly called diplomacy) and corrupting others which made him ultimately the conqueror of Napoleon.

Tipu's dominion was also partitioned. The English, of course, had the lion's share, but a slice of the territories was also given to the Nizam. The descendant of the old Raja whom Hydar had made a prisoner, was given a portion of Mysore to rule. This territory is now known as the State of Mysore—the model state in India.*

Thus ended the last war with Tipu, the successful result of which benefited the British in so many different ways. In its origin, in its progress and in its termination, it fills one of the darkest pages in the history of India.

It has not appeared necessary to us to discuss the question of Tipu's alleged intrigues with the French. Nowhere has James Mill in his able work on Indian History shown greater judgment and cogent reasoning than in his handling of this subject.

Mill has thoroughly exposed the fallacious arguments on which the Governor-

* The creation of the new state and restoration of the descendant of the Rajas of Mysore was not undertaken from any motives of philanthropy, but as a reward for the manner in which the members of the ex-royal family of Mysore had helped the British by betraying Tipu. The descendant of the Hindu Royal family of Mysore on whom the state was bestowed as a gift was an infant. So it was that the astute Hindu Minister, Purniya, was appointed to be the Diwan. This Hindu minister bore very close resemblance to the French statesman Talleyrand. He had loyally served Hydar and his son, Tipu, but without much regret for the members of the family of his late Muhammadan masters, he as promptly entered into the service of his Hindu master, as if no revolution had taken place in the political situation of his country.

General based his case against Tipu. Even the editor of his History, Horace Hayman Wilson, has not been able to controvert Mill's views. But it is necessary to state that after Tipu's death, it has been alleged that some documents written in French were found in his Palace from which the Governor-General concluded that Tipu had been intriguing with the French against the English. Mill writes :

"When the papers of Tippoo, found in the palace of Seringapatam, were examined, the correspondence was discovered which had passed between him and the French. With this Lord Wellesley shows that he was singularly delighted ; as if, without such means of persuasion, he had dreaded, that the grounds of the war, successfully terminated, would not have appeared satisfactory to all those whose approbation he was interested in obtaining."*

Mill has taken some pains to demonstrate the innocent nature of the whole correspondence. But should not one suspect that some of the documents which were held up as incriminating Tipu, documents in which that Prince was alleged to have proposed offensive and defensive alliance with France for the purpose of expelling the English from India, were forgeries ? We should remember that the Governor of Madras at the time of the War with Tipu, was the son of that Clive who as a reward for deceiving Amin Chand by forgery was raised to the peerage. The Governor-General himself was a French scholar ; he had kept a French woman as his concubine. This fact also should be remembered in suspecting the genuineness of the French documents incriminating Tipu.

It was a singular fact that not more than 120 Frenchmen were found in Tipu's service when Seringapatam was captured. This shows Tipu's wisdom, for which he was reputed. He had derived an important lesson from the campaign of 1792 when the French officers, men on whom he had relied for help, deserted him at the most critical moment. It was therefore that he was so bitter against the French, whom he considered to be "of a crooked disposition, faithless, and the enemies of mankind." To have suspected him of allying himself with the French was preposterous nonsense. But it served the purpose of the English to make this a justifiable plea for attacking Tipu. With the death of Tipu did not end the troubles of the British in Mysore. There were men in that principality who were opposed to placing it at the feet of the conquering English. Chief amongst them was Dhundia Waugh, whom the British historians are pleased to call a bandit or robber, but who appears to us to have been a real patriot. It is related in the *History of the Reign of Tipu Sultan* by Colonel Miles † that

"Futteh Hydur Sultan... abandoned all intention of fighting or further opposition, although several of his bravest officers, such as Mullik Jehan Khan,... also Syed Nasir Ali Mir Miran and other Asofs dissuaded him from peace, and strenuously urged him to continue the war.

"... all the children and relations of the deceased Sultan, (many of whose ladies remained,) with Kurim Sahib and his family were sent to Rai Vellore, and a liberal salary was allowed to each of the princes,..."

Thus ended the rule of the dynasty of the Muhammadan usurper Hydar Ali Naik in Mysore.

* (*History*, Vol. VI, p. 109).

† Panini Office Reprint, p. 195.

CHAPTER XVIII

WELLESLEYS'S TREATMENT OF THE NAWAB VAZIR OF OUDH

After having conquered Tipu's dominion by force, Wellesley cast his longing eyes on the fertile territories of those Indian princes with whom the East India Company had concluded treaties of perpetual friendship. Oudh was the garden of India. So Wellesley could not resist the temptation of swallowing it, if possibly he could.

The degenerate nature of the Mussalman Nawabs of Oudh was well-known to the Christian "adventurers" constituting the East India Company. Hence their representatives always fleeced them when it suited their convenience and purpose to do so. The Marquess Wellesley was not going to prove an exception to that rule.

One of the Nawabs of Oudh, named Vazir Ali, was deposed and kept a State Prisoner in Benares, where his Keeper was one Mr. Cherry. It may be that he was intriguing with the nobles and subjects of Oudh. He was ordered to be removed from Benares to Calcutta. He thought that his removal was suggested by Mr. Cherry, with whom he had an interview and whom he assassinated. He with his followers ran amuck and, besides Mr. Cherry, killed two other Englishmen.

Vazir Ali made his escape from Benares and many a vagabond and person of evil disposition gathered round him. With such a force he raided some of the places then situated in the principality of Oudh. The Nawab was alarmed and requested the Company the temporary loan of British troops to subdue his whilom predecessor. The request was acceded to by the Company with great alacrity. It happened in the regime of Lord Wellesley, to whom it served as a pretext to deprive the ruler of Oudh of the sovereignty of half of his dominion. This was done by the Governor-General in the name of *reform.*

Mr. Lumsden was the Resident at Lucknow when Lord Mornington arrived in India as its Governor-General. But that officer was not going to be such a vile tool of the noble lord as he desired him to be for the ruin of the Oudh prince. So he was made to resign his post, to which office one Colonel Scott was appointed, who was to carry out the nefarious scheme of the Governor-General. What this nefarious scheme under the euphemistic term "reform" consisted in and how this was carried out has been very succinctly described in *Dacoitee in Excelsis,* written by a responsible British officer named Major Bird, to which the reader should turn for details.*

The manner in which the Marquess Wellesley wrested from the Nawab-Vazir, half his dominions—and those also the more fertile portions—did not escape the notice of some of the politicians of England. That true and sincere British friend of India, Philip Francis, who two decades before had helped in the impeachment of Warren Hastings,

† A Cheap Reprint of this work has been published by the Panini office, of which see pp. 30 *et seq.*

was still alive and so lost no time when the Marquess Wellesley and his brothers returned to England to help one Mr. Paull, who resided in Oudh when the Governor-General was depriving the Nawab-Vizir of his territories, in his accusation against the Governor-General of India. Burke was not then alive and no orator of his calibre sided with Paull and Francis in their attempt at impeachment of the Marquess Wellesley. Those were also the days when Napoleon Bonaparte was disturbing the even tenor of existence of the natives of Great Britain. Hence, no wonder, the majority of the members of the House of Commons did not favour the motion for impeachment of the Wellesley brothers.

It was alleged that Francis bore grudge against Warren Hastings and, therefore, out of malice, he influenced Burke and others to impeach the first Governor-General of India. But no such motives could be imputed to him in his conduct towards Wellesley. Allegations, however, were made against Mr. Paull that he had been prompted by ill-will to prosecute that noble lord. This compelled that member to assure the House on 27th January, 1806,

"that he dared the breath of calumny to impute to him, with justice, any motives but those of a public nature. He bore no animosity to Lord Wellesley personally, he would exert his honest endeavours to prosecute him to conviction, as the enemy to the happiness and prosperity of India, and to the best interests of the mother country; he could consider him in no light but that of a great state delinquent, in the situation that Mr. Hastings stood on his return from abroad, with this essential difference, that what was undefined crime in the case of Mr. Hastings, was positive criminality in the case of Lord Wellesley. The latter could plead no error in judgment, no ignorance of the laws of his country, having been a member of the British parliament when the articles of impeachment were voted against Mr. Hastings."

It was after some delay and difficulty that the papers called for by Mr. Paull were ordered to be printed and laid on the table. This enabled that member to frame his charges against the ex-Governor-General, who had several indecent partisans in the House. One of these declared,

"by what kind of tribunal was the party accused to be tried? Before one, certainly, where the guilty man might escape through delay, or the most innocent man be ruined through expense; and, therefore, if there were any other legal or competent jurisdiction, before which this cause could be tried, the House ought not, for the sake of speedy and substantial justice, to proceed by the ordinary mode of impeachment."*

This made Philip Francis say that the House of Commons

"was probably the grand inquest, whose province was to inquire respecting the validity of great criminal charges, and then to proceed as the accuser or prosecutor before a high court of justice."

After some wranglings and delay, on the 28th May, 1806, the article of charge of high crimes and misdemeanours committed by Richard Colley Marquis Wellesley, in his transactions with respect to the Nawab-Vazir of Oudh, was read by the clerk at the table.

At the same time, Mr. Paull's written statement in support of the charge was also read. His indictment was very powerful and unanswerable. He said that Lord Wellesley,

* Mr. Banke's speech on May 8, 1806, Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. VII, p. 65.

"in defiance and contempt of the laws, to the strict observance of which he was bound by engagements the most solemn, did, from the time of his arrival in India, conceive and entertain the intention, an intention which he finally executed, to encroach upon the power and rights of the said Nabob Vizier, to interfere in the internal affairs of his government, to undermine and to destroy his authority over his household affairs, his troops, and his subjects, and, under pretences the most false, to extort from him, the said Nabob Vizier, his hereditary dominions, so solemnly guaranteed to him by the Company in the treaty of 1798, and that all this he the said Marquis Wellesley did without the concurrence, approbation, or consent, and even without the knowledge, of the Council of Bengal, and without communicating to the said council, or to his employers the said East India Company, any information whatever of such his intention or proceedings."

The statement of Mr. Paull was a very lengthy one and his description of the means adopted by Lord Wellesley to gain his object, marked out that lord as a criminal of the vilest type. The speeches on the charge reflected hardly any credit for fairness or honesty on the friends of Lord Wellesley.

On the 18th of June 1806, on the motion of Mr. Paull, the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider the charge with Lord Folkestone in the chair. Lord Teignmouth was called in, but his examination was not such as would have exposed the proceedings of the servants of the Company in Oudh. This was due to the manner in which Lord Wellesley's partisans interrupted Mr. Paull in his interrogations of the witness. The next day, Sir Alured Clarke was called to the bar and examined. But one of the questions put to him by Mr. Paull was strenuously opposed by some of the members ; whereon Mr. Paull moved for an adjournment in which he was supported by Mr. Fox and Mr. Hutchinson.

On the 6th July, Lord Folkestone said that "obstructions had been thrown in the way" of Mr. Paull ; and another member named Dr. Lawrence stated that Mr. Paull

"was goaded at one time, and thwarted at another, and it was now endeavoured to precipitate that decision which had hitherto been retarded."

That session of Parliament did not come to any decision regarding the Oudh charge. Mr. Grant truly said that

"the house could not, in so thin an attendance, comprising of so many of the noble Marquis's friends, and at so late a period of the session, come to a decision, consistently with the decorum which belonged to its deliberative justice; . . ."

So ended the consideration of the Oudh charge in that session, after which Parliament was dissolved and in the new Parliament neither Mr. Paull nor Mr. Francis found any seat. Consequently, the interest of the members on the Oudh charge was not so great as it was when Paull and Francis spoke on it from their long residence in India and extensive knowledge of Oudh politics. During the whole of 1807, the question was not touched at all in Parliament. But the conduct of the Marquess Wellesley relative to the Oudh charge came up for discussion in the early part of the year 1808. On February 9, 1808, Lord Folkestone moved

"that the several papers presented to the house in January, February, March, June, and July, 1806, and in February 1807, relative to the Affairs of the Province of Oude, be taken into consideration on Monday, the 22nd inst."

On that day, after Lord Folkestone had moved for taking into consideration the papers, Mr. Creevey rose and said that it would be better to refer the papers to a Committee to arrange and make their report. For, he said :

"The papers were in such confusion that it was indispensable that they should be arranged before they could be perused, he had not met with three gentlemen who had read them."

But unfortunately, his proposition was not approved by the House, for it would delay the proceedings. In vain, Sir T. Turton

"exhorted the house not to hurry a proceeding of such great importance. . . . . . It affected the rights of a whole people, who had no tribunal but that house to whom to apply for justice. They had no friend but that house, and if it slighted the appeal now made, it forfeited its own character and honour and the character and honour of the country."

In vain, Sir S. Romilly expressed the opinion

"that to send the evidence to a committee to return a digested report of it to the house, would be the only means of arriving at substantial justice."

But when were the British people as a class actuated to do justice, substantial or otherwise, to the non-Christian princes and peoples of India ? Those who moved for the appointment of the Committee found their motion rejected by the House.

The adjourned debate on the Oudh charge was resumed on Wednesday, March 9, 1808, when Lord Folkestone rose and exposed the manner in which the friends of Marquis Wellesley were creating public opinion in his favour. He said that he had seen pamphlets which were

"written to bias the public mind in his favour, and were distributed gratis, not only to the members of that house, but in like manner through all the principal taverns and coffee houses in London."

Then, he truly said that

"In this case, the house were called on to judge between the noble Marquis and the Nabob ; but he begged the house to recollect, that, in truth, there was only one party before them. The Marquis Wellesley had every advantage. The case was to be tried on his own grounds : the only documents, his own account of the transaction. He was before the house, if not in person, at least represented by friends and relations, persons bound to him by ties of blood, by friendship, by obligations. The Nabob, on the other hand, had no representative but such as the justice of his cause and the cruelty of the oppression he had suffered had called forth. He had no means of telling his story ; no opportunity of producing his proofs. The house ought to look with a partial and indulgent eye to his case. However, as the advocate of the Nabob, he asked for nothing but justice ; sheer naked justice—justice founded on the facts as Lord Wellesley had himself related them ; and he was sure that, if the house but give a fair hearing to the case, these facts thus detailed would be sufficient to induce the house to mark, with the severest reprobation, the conduct of the noble Marquis : he hoped, too, to afford some relief and mitigation to the unfortunate Nabob."

But Lord Folkestone's pleading for justice to a non-Christian prince was in vain before the highly professing Christian members of the House of Commons. What if he narrated the manner in which the Nawab, on his part, observed the treaty he had entered into with the Company, and the treachery of the Marquis in forcing on him a new treaty by which he was deprived of half of his dominion ? His words had no effect on those members, when he proceeded to say

"that after a very protracted negotiation, in which, on the one side, is displayed all the arts of chicanery, accompanied with threats the most undisguised, and language of reproach and reviling the most contemptuous and unmerited, while on the other, patient, forbearing and earnest supplication were alone manifested, the unhappy Nabob was compelled to yield to the Company a portion of territory, of the alleged annual income of one crore and thirty-five lakhs of rupees in perpetual sovereignty, and to deprive himself even of all efficient government over the remainder."

He moved a series of twelve resolutions condemning the transaction of Marquess Wellesley and aiming at reparation and justice to the unfortunate Nawab.

Every resolution was vehemently opposed by the friends and relations of the Marquess : for it should be remembered that his two brothers, *viz.*, General Sir Arthur Wellesley and Mr. Henry Wellesley, were at that time sitting in the House as its members. Like that marine creature which secrets ink to elude the pursuit of its enemy, the friends and relations of Lord Wellesley uttered words and arguments to mystify and mislead the members of the House. One would have expected a judicial frame of mind from Sir John Anstruther, the ex-Chief Justice of Bengal, in discussing the Oudh transaction. But he shwed indecent partisanship for his noble friend in the speech made in the House on 9th March, 1808. He and other friends of Lord Wellesley uttered trash and nonsense in his defence which it was not difficult for those who supported the resolutions to thoroughly expose.

One of the honourable members said that the functions of Parliament "were of a legislative, not of a judicial nature," and so it was improper for them to discuss the conduct of Marquess Wellesley on the Oudh charge. Against this frivolous objection Sir Thomas Turton said :

"Let me ask the hon. gent. where, or to whom in this particular instance, could the appeal against British injustice and oppression be made ?—Not to our courts of law and equity ; there it has been already determined, that an independent sovereign (yes a 'dependent Nabob', as he is called) can neither institute or defend a suit. To the sovereign, in council, can he appeal ?—The constitution of our Indian Government permits not ; this. Where then can he apply, with a possibility of success, but a British Parliament, and to parliament only ?"

Referring to the pretences assigned for Lord Wellesley's conduct, he said , these were "threefold ; first, the right ; secondly, the expediency and even necessity for the exercise of it ; and thirdly, instructions of the government at home.—First, Sir, as to the right of the Government of India, to commit these acts of tyranny. From whence is it derived ? . . . Says an hon. gent. (Mr. Whitshed Keene) the right is 'that of the sword, obtained by conquest, by that alone can your government in India be supported.' What occasion then for treaties, if the will of the conqueror is to be the only law ? . . . an honourable and gallant Colonel (Allan) . . . says, 'the Nabob was not an independent prince, he could not expect to be treated as such.' I have read something of this in two long publications gratuitously conveyed to me, on the eve of this motion ; and I have thought it my duty to wade through them. Does the noble Marquis rest his defence on either of them ? . . . To satisfy any man of the wildness and extravagance of the doctrines contained in them the author, after deducing from Vattel, Puffendorf Montesquieu, and even Locke, the right to treat the Nabob as our slave, represents him, as filling 'an office perfectly analogous to that of lord lieutenant of Ireland' ; and by another author we are told 'that Oude was a dependent fief, the Company paramount lord, and the Nabob its vassal,' and I think the result of his argument is, that not having taken from our vassal the whole of his dominion, we have treated him with 'signal indulgence.' I should be ashamed to answer arguments (if so they can be called) like these ; . . . .

But, sir, if this unhappy prince had no independent power, if he possessed no power, no dominions or subjects, but those of the Company, existing only in a combined and amalgamated state with theirs, what occasion for this treaty of 1798, explanatory of the respective rights of the Company, and of the prince?"

In a masterly manner, Sir Thomas Turton showed that the Company had no right to deprive the Nawab of his dominion. Regarding the policy of this nefarious transaction, he observed:

"I shall always think, sir, that if the policy of our government in India was to strengthen our north-western frontier by the possession of the Doab, and by the dismemberment of Oude, and the extension of our territory in India (a policy I much doubt), it would have been more manly, more becoming the character and honour of the British Government, to have openly avowed our determination, rather than by these little unworthy pretexts and artifices, so insulting to common sense and honesty, endeavouring to justify an act, which though in itself atrocious and tyrannical, was, in its execution, attended with circumstances still more disgraceful to the British name and character, than the act itself."

Lord Wellesley, it was said by Sir John Anstruther, had only followed the instructions he received from his employees, and the commutation of territory for subsidy had been recommended by them. With reference to this, Sir Thomas Turton said:

"When the right hon. Baronet stated the instructions Lord Wellesley had received, and held in his hand a large folio volume of papers and instructions, I thought he would have favoured us with one letter or paper of instructions from the secret committee, or the Court of Directors, justifying Lord Wellesley in his conduct to the Nabob of Oude, and which might have escaped my observation; and although I should not have thought the violation of a solemn treaty, even under the sanction of such authority, deserving the approval of this house; yet, certainly, the noble Marquis could not have been accused in such case of anything more than submitting to be the instrument of the Company's injustice. How then, sir, must the house have been astonished to find, that not one letter, not one scrap of paper, not one expression in any letter, which can be tortured into an instruction to the Marquis Wellesley, even to commute the subsidy for territory, with the consent of the Nabob, much less against it, has been produced or read," .... "Not one instance of instruction to any governor-general in India, to obtain an exchange of territory for subsidy by force is to be found ... I defy the right hon. Baronet to adduce even one solitary instance."

So the ex-Chief Justice of Bengal said a thing which was not true. Neither logic nor rhetoric in support of Lord Folkestone's Resolution was of any avail to those who tried to do justice to the unfortunate sovereign of Oudh. The House not only rejected the Resolution, but approved the motion of Sir John Anstruther, who showed himself such a coward as not to answer Sir Thomas Turton when he challenged his veracity, for a vote of thanks to Marquess Wellesley, regarding which Mr. Sheridan observed:

"The whole he had heard in defence of the noble Marquis, did not appear to him to justify such a measure."

Thus ended the long drawn out debate on the Oudh charge on the night of March 15, 1808. A few days afterwards, *i.e.*, on the 31st March 1808, an attempt was made by some members of Parliament to move

"for compensation to be made the Nabob of Oude for the losses he had sustained by the seizure of one-half of his territories, and the very embarrassed state of his finances, occasioned by the measures of Marquis Wellesley's government in India."

Although several eloquent and well-reasoned speeches were made in support of this motion, it met with no better fate than the previous one. Mr. R. Thornton

"lamented to see so thin an attendance upon a discussion so interesting to the national character. He thought the house on a former night had behaved worse even than Lord Wellesley himself, in the manner in which they had got rid of the charges brought against him. . . . . The noble Marquis seemed to have carried a sample of French fraternization to India. The treaty was really a sort of Gallican hug, in which the noble Marquis had squeezed the Nabob to death. One might as well call a robbery committed by a foot-pad on a traveller on Hanslow-Heath, a treaty !"

It was much to be regretted that Sir Philip Francis was not a member of Parliament at this time. Referring to the service he had rendered to the cause of good government in India, one Honourable member (Mr. Howarth) said :

"Yes, sir, some of the worthy directors have now and then gently hinted at the mismanagements of their governments, and at the misconduct of their servants in India, over whom they had no control. But these intimations were rare and feeble, in comparison with the information given us by an honourable friend of mine (Sir Philip Francis) who is no longer a member of this house. From year to year as the mischiefs increased his speeches kept pace with them. From year to year, I might almost say from day to day, his talents and his industry were employed in exposing the fatal folly of that destructive system, which has been adopted by your government in India, and encouraged and protected in England, and the ruinous consequences which would result from it. His performance of this invidious duty was not confined to his speeches here. His writings addressed to the public predicted everything that has happened ; writings, sir, as remarkable for the clearness, the purity, and precision of their style, as they are for the comprehensive knowledge they contain of the subjects on which they treated ; and I believe, sir, it would be as difficult to find a person, who has displayed in your Indian affairs more ability, more perseverance, and more integrity, as it would be to find another instance of a man, who has deserved more of his country, and whose merits have been so ill rewarded, as those of the honourable gentleman I allude to."

Lord Wellesley appointed his brother, Henry (who became afterwards Lord Cowley), Lieutenant-Governor of the Ceded Provinces.* But his appointment was strongly objected to by the Company, because he was not a servant of theirs. He was removed from that office and provided for afterwards by being placed in charge of Farrukhabad, which had been taken from its Nawab by the treaty signed at Bareilly on the 4th of June 1802, by which the Nawab Imdad Hussain Khan, handed over his dominion, to the Company in perpetual sovereignty in return for a stipend of Rs. 1,08,000 a year payable to himself, his heirs and successors.

How this was effected, will be evident from the proceedings of the House of Commons, extracts from which are given below.

On June 9, 1806, Mr. Paull presented to the House of Commons the following

"Article of Charge of High Crimes and Misdemeanours committed by Richard Colley, Marquis Wellesley, in his transactions with respect to the Nabob of Farruckabad."

* In the *Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society*, Vol. I, Part II (June 1918), Mr. D. Dewar, I.C.S., has published an interesting paper on the Administration of the Ceded Provinces under Henrv Wellesley, 1801-3.

The small principality of Farrukhabad was governed by Muhammadan princes of Afghan descent, and its protection and defence were entrusted to the Nawab Vazir of Oudh, for which purpose he received four lakhs of rupees annually from that principalty; the East India Company guaranteed the fulfilment of the respective compacts between them. But the servants of the Company "under the influence of unworthy motives, interfered in the internal affairs of that principality." This led Cornwallis, in concluding a new treaty with the Nawab Vazir of Oudh in 1787, to stipulate that

"The English resident at Farruckabad should be recalled, and that no other should afterwards be appointed."

But in November 1801, Lord Wellesley

"in opposition to the agreement made not to interfere in the affairs of Farruckabad; ... and, in opposition to all right and justice, did conceive the intention, and form the determination of wresting from the Nabob the whole of his authority, his government, his revenues, and his territory; which unlawful and wicked intention he did, without the knowledge or consent of the council, through the agency of, and in concert with, his brother the Hon. Henry Wellesley, under the most unjust pretences, and by the most iniquitous means, finally accomplish and effect.....That the said Marquis Wellesley, wishing to cloak this unjustifiable attempt with some show of equity, did direct the said Hon. Henry Wellesley, among other means, to prevail upon the said Nabob of Farruckabad to consent to an abandonment of his just rights to his own principality, and to sign an agreement for transferring them to the said East India Company; but that, foreseeing that, as the said Nabob had but just passed his minority, and would be therefore naturally inclined to resort to the old councillors and friends of his family for advice upon so important an affair and foreseeing also that their influence would prevent his acquiescence; the said Marquis did authorize the said Henry Wellesley to promise to the said friends and connections of the said Nabob, ample rewards, in case they coincided with his views, and to threaten them with expulsion from their country, in case they opposed them; thus contriving, by intrigue and corruption, or by violence and injustice, to draw the said friends of the said Nabob into a traitorous dereliction of their duty to their own hereditary prince."

The foul play that was practised on the Nawab of Farrukhabad in making him abdicate his *masnad* and part with his dominion was exposed by Mr. Paull in his speech in the House of Commons on April 18, 1806. He said

"that by the authority of the Marquis, the Nabob was sent for Lucknow, for the purpose of signing an agreement, and after his arrival, his seal was not to be found at his dwelling; and he would engage to prove, that the same seal was afterwards found in the house of the British Government, at Lucknow."

It is a pity that the Farrukhabad charge was not proceeded with.

CHAPTER XIX

MARQUESS WELLESLEY'S TREATMENT OF THE NAWAB OF ARCOT

In a previous chapter has been mentioned the origin of the connection of the East India Company with the Nawabs of the Carnatic, as well as the manner in which those Muhammadan princes were involved in debt by the Christian adventurers who posed as their friends. Those princes were no longer of any service to the Company and so Lord Mornington wanted to annihilate the independent existence of the Carnatic, or reduce it to an insignificant state. When he went to Madras with the object of waging war against Tipu, he wrote a letter from there to the Nawab of the Carnatic, dated Fort St. George, 24th April, 1799. This letter consisted of 63 paragraphs, and occupies 14 printed pages of Wellesley's Dispatches. After referring to the conduct of Tipu, his Lordship wrote that the third article of the treaty of 1792 stipulates, that, "in the event of war breaking out in the Carnatic, and countries appertaining to either party, and dependent on the Carnatic, or contiguous thereto, it is agreed, for the better prosecution of it, that as long as it shall last, the said Company shall possess full authority over the Carnatic except the Jaghirs belonging to the family of the said Nawab, and except also certain charities, and shall collect the revenues thereof, the said Company hereby engaging that, during such war, they will pay to the said Nawab one-fifth share of the net revenue arising therefrom."

After quoting the above article of the treaty of 1792, Lord Mornington proceeded :

"Under this article it is now become the right of the Company to exercise that full authority over the Carnatic, which is thus formally acknowledged to be necessary for the better prosecution of war....

"I am aware that both your Highness and your respected father have ever been disinclined to the assumption of the Carnatic by the article in question,"

Of course, the Company was receiving the stipulated sum from the Carnatic quite regularly. But regarding this regular payment, the Christian Lord wrote to the Muhammadan Nawab :

"Neither your Highness nor the Company can reflect with satisfaction on the regular discharge of your monthly payments, when those payments are known and acknowledged to be effected by means, which aggravate your Highness's embarrassments, and rapidly exhaust the territorial security pledged to the Company for the military subsidy."

His Lordship went on shedding crocodile tears when he wrote :

"The Carnatic, therefore, in addition to the calamitous misrule of those who have governed it, under temporary assignments of territory, has been subjected to all the accumulated evils of a divided government and of a fluctuating and precarious authority."

Lord Mornington referred to the debt of His Highness to the Company as follows :

First.—Of the balance as reported by Messrs. Woolf and Place, on the 1st July, 1793—35,06,185.

"Second.—Balance of the Kistbundy Account, as per account, made up to 9th Sept, 1791—19,98,006.

"Third.—Balance of the new Cavalry Loan, with interest at 8 per cent., to the 12th October, 1798—11,62,770.

Total.—66,66,911."

It was for the above-mentioned reasons that Lord Mornington wanted to take possession of the greater portion of the Carnatic for the Company. He pointed out the advantages that would accrue to the Nawab as follows:

"Under the new arrangement your Highness would be relieved from all urgent demands either of a public or private nature. and you would possess a much more ample revenue than you now enjoy, with the additional satisfaction of reflecting that your possession was liable to no disturbance, either from the contingency of war, or from any casual failure of your resources. You would be at liberty to direct your undivided attention to the cultivation and improvement of those resources to the utmost practical extent; and *you never could feel the necessity of injuring the main springs of your revenue for the purpose of meeting the exigency of occasional difficulty.*"

Then his lordship wrote what amounted to a threat to the Nawab:

"The opportunity is now peculiarly favourable to the final adjustment of your Highness's affairs; if you suffer it to pass away without improvement, events may intervene to aggravate your Highness's embarrassments, to postpone, or even to preclude, all final arrangement of your affairs, and ultimately, to involve you in inextricable distress."

Such was the warning or threat held out to the Nawab by Lord Mornington.

But the Nawab was not cowed down by the threat, nor did he tamely submit to the dictation of the Governor-General. With all the courtesy inherent in an Indian monarch, he wrote on 13th May, 1799, in reply to the above-mentioned letter of Lord Mornington:

"I acknowledge, My Lord, that under certain circumstances, explained by the third Article of the Treaty of 1792, the Company are vested with authority to assume the Carnatic and, amongst other things, empowered to collect the revenue, which it yields, and I confess, without regard to the *consequence of that confession*, that the assumption of the control over the affairs and revenues of my country, under the provision of the Treaty, would occasion a severe and heartfelt affliction; yet, if the time should arrive, which should render it necessary, that the Company avail themselves of the objects which that article secures, I hope that Divine Providence will endue me with fortitude, adapted to the necessity of the season, and the adversity of fortune, that I may make the sacrifice required of me, if not with cheerfulness, at least with dignity and resignation. . . .

"I do not presume to know the grounds on which your Lordship has formed your opinion of the instability and uncertainly of my affairs, nor is it necessary that I should be acquainted with them. It is sufficient for me to know that they are abundant enough to enable me to keep with punctuality my plighted faith. . . .

"I do most unequivocally assure your Lordship, on the word and faith of a sovereign, that no one foot of the Districts, set apart by the treaty of 1792, have been, or are in any manner of way, directly or indirectly assigned by me, or *with my knowledge, to any individual whatsoever*; and having made this solemn and unreserved declaration, I would hope that I need not urge more. . . .

"I have been represented, my Lord, to the world, and it were impossible to calculate how far I may yet be injured by it, unless I put a limit to the representation, to have notoriously mortgaged and assigned the Districts, pledged to the Company, and the manner of my doing it has been publicly and confidently spoken of and proclaimed. . . .

"You need not be told, my Lord, of the unconquerable and insurmountable obstacle in the way of any new engagement, which could not be overstepped without outraging every principle that

should make engagements binding; for your Lordship is not unacquainted with my revered and honoured father, who, with his departing spirit, entreated and enjoined me that I should not consent to the alteration of a treaty, which he had painfully concluded: and I assured him on the most sacred obligation that religion imposes that I would obey his dying commands. Does it remain for me to conjure your Lordship, by the nobleness of your nature—by your filial piety- by the reverence you owe to God—by each and all of these, not to renew an application which I cannot accede to, without a breach of all moral and religious duties, and cannot listen to without reproach . . .

"The victories which my friends have obtained by Divine favour, have given the greatest joy to me who am their ancient ally. I consider them as an auspicious omen of my own happiness, and am persuaded that your Lordship will manifest your kindness towards me, especially in support of my right. The talooks of Carrore, the two Sealams, and as far as Tungarpeatty, have always been dependencies on Trichinopoly. The father of Tipu arrogantly usurped these talooks. I hope they will now be restored to me by your Lordship's justice. Another request that I have to make and with which I trust your Lordship will not only be not offended, but that you will grant my desire is this—when friends acquire an immensity of power, those who are their sincere and ancient friends, are inspired with certain hopes of obtaining their wishes. The troops for which I pay nine lacks of pagodas yearly, in the service of the Company, were employed with those of my friends in the reduction of the Mysore country. I trust, therefore, that I shall be allowed to participate in the conquered countries, in proportion to the sum I contribute for those troops, and that thereby through your Lordship's justice and equity, I who have always followed the fortunes of my friends, and prayed for their acquirement of such successes, may obtain my wishes."*

The Nawab succeeded in giving very satisfactory explanations of all that had been urged against him. His requests were perfectly legitimate and reasonable. But it was not to the interests of the Christian merchants constituting the East India Company to give any attention to them. The noble Lord did not condescend to reply to the Nawab's letter. The Christian "Adventurers" in England also did not like the independent existence of the Carnatic. Thus the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, writing his letter to the Earl of Mornington on the 21st March, 1799, which was received at Fort William, 5th August, 1799, said:

"The double Government existing in the Carnatic has long been felt as a serious calamity to that country. It enfeebles the natural resources of the country, and above all, tends to continue that system of intrigue and consequent corruption which has been imputed to the Madras Government so much more than to our other settlements. . . . . . Consistently with our treaties with the Nabob of Arcot, we cannot at present materially meliorate his Government, but must wait favourable opportunities, and embrace such means of conciliation and attention to him, as are most likely to accomplish this desirable object."†

Lord Mornington's reply to the above communication is so important that a considerable extract from it § is given below:

"The double Government of the Carnatic is a difficulty which continues to present the most serious and alarming obstacles to every attempt at reform. The expectation of favourable opportunities of negotiation with the Nabob of Arcot, and of the effects of conciliation and attention towards him will, I am convinced, be ever disappointed by the event. You recollect with what sanguine hopes I looked forward to the result of measures adopted in a spirit of mildness and persuasion, but I have found them entirely vain and fruitless; nor can I cherish the slightest ray of

* Despatches, Vol: II, pp, 1-7.

† *Ibid.*, II. 109.

§ Ibid., pp. 244—245.

hope that such a course can ever prove successful, during the life of the present Nabob. His Highness is surrounded by European advisers of the most dangerous and profligate character, whose interests are deeply involved in the perpetuation of the abuses of his Government, and who (amongst other means of perverting his Councils) labour to inspire him with a notion of a distinction of interests and powers between the Royal Government and that constituted by Act of Parliament for the administration of the British Empire in India. In all his conversations and correspondence, he studiously distinguishes his Majesty's Government from that of the Court of Directors ; uniformly treating the latter with disrespect, and even with ridicule and contempt. In my last conversation with His Highness he plainly declared to me that he considered his Majesty to be his father, friend, ally, and protector but that the Court of Directors desired to "obtain his country any how."

"The principles of this distinction are encouraged in his Highness's mind by the letters and embassies which have occasionally reached him from his Majesty through channels not only unconnected but avowedly at variance with the British Government in India. All such letters and embassies have the most pernicious tendency to withdraw the confidence and respect of the natives from the Governments in India, and to fix their attention on his Majesty's naval or military officers, or such persons (of whatever character) as may accidentally be the bearers of his letters. The frequent letters which his Highness the Nabob receives from His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales greatly aggravate the same evil ; and it is with the utmost concern that I feel myself bound by my public duty to request that you will take an opportunity of representing to His Royal Highness that his correspondence with the Nabob of the Carnatic has produced an effect entirely contrary to His Royal Highness's wishes, and has been highly injurious to the public service in India."*

Wellesley wanted to cut off the Nawab's communications with the Royalty of England and coerce him to respect the Company of Adventurers, for whom he felt and that too very justly, the greatest contempt. The Nawab was not going to lose his liberty and country so very easily as the Christian lord was scheming. His lordship therefore wrote in the letter mentioned above :

"I am thoroughly convinced, that no effectual remedy can ever be applied to the evils which afflict that country, without obtaining from the Nabob powers at least as extensive as those vested in the Company by the late treaty of Tanjore. At the death of the present Nabob, such a treaty might easily be obtained from his successor, (if after that event it should be thought advisable to admit any nominal sovereign of the Carnatic, excepting the Company). A young man resides at Chepauk, who is treated by the Nabob as his Highness's son....... Numerous legitimate descendants of Wallajah are in existence. The whole question of the succession will therefore be completely open to the decision of the Company upon the decease of the present Nabob. The inclination of my opinion is, that the most advisable settlement would be, to place Omdut-ul-Omra's supposed son on the Musnad, under a treaty similar to that which was lately concluded with the Rajah of Tanjore. It will, however, be expedient that you should immediately consider whether it might not be a more effectual arrangement to provide liberally for every branch of the descendants of Wallajah and Omdut-ul-Omra, and to vest even the nominal sovereignty of the Carnatic in the Company."†

Thus it will be seen how the Christian functionaries of the "Society of Adventurers" were eager and anxious to possess the Carnatic. Some pretext of a muddied stream was needed for the wolf to swallow up the lamb. And the wolf or wolves had not to wait long for such a pretext. Wrote the Governor-General in the letter to Mr. Dundas referred to above, that

* *Ibid.*, pp. 240-241.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 244-245

"the records of the late Tippoo Sultaun which fell into our hands after the capture of Seringapatam have furnished me with the most authentic and indisputable evidence that the secret correspondence of a nature the most hostile to the British power, was opened with Tippoo Sultaun by the late Nabob Wallajah towards the close of his life, through the agency of Omdut-ul-Omra, the present Nabob."*

Regarding this alleged conspiracy on the part of the Nawabs, Major Evans Bell writes :

"We are called upon then to believe that the Nawab Wallajah, in his old age, after fifty years of faithful alliance and friendship with the English; and thirty years of almost incessant warfare with Hyder Ali and Tippoo Sultan—both of whom, and especially the latter, had seized every opportunity of injuring him and of loading him with insults,—suddenly took it into his head to conspire against his friends of half a century, and to league with his enemies of thirty years. And we are called upon to believe that the time chosen for this sudden change of policy was just when the power of his friends was apparently established without a competitor, and when the power of his old enemy had fallen to nothing, beneath all hope of recovery. Wallajah and Omdut-ool-Oomra are accused of having begun their hostile intrigues with Tippoo in 1702, after Lord Cornwallis's campaign, when he had been compelled to cede half his dominions, to pay three crores and thirty lacks of rupees as a war indemnity, and to submit to the humiliating condition of sending two of his sons as hostages to Madras. And it is with two of Tippoo's officials who were sent to Madras in attendance on these young Princes, that the Nawabs are accused of having concerted and carried on this desperate conspiracy with their discomfited foe against their triumphant friends and allies.

"Extravagantly improbable as such a tale of conspiracy must appear, we should of course be bound to believe it if a sufficiency of evidence were produced. But not only is there no trustworthy evidence brought forward, but if every statement made by Gholam Ali and Ali Reza, Tippoo Sultan's Wakeels, both in their written reports from Madras found among the records at Seringapatam, and in their depositions before the commission of enquiry, were to be accepted as truth, it would amount to *nothing*. The proofs of dark designs and hostile intentions on the part of Wallajah and his eldest son, which were collected by the commission of inquiry, are really so frivolous, even if considered as true, that but for the strong bias towards any conclusion affording a pretext for assuming the administration of the Carnatic, which we know from his previous endeavours in that direction actuated Lord Wellesley, we should be surprised that he did not throw the whole mass of gossip and guess-work into his waste paper basket." †

No historian has devoted so much attention to the consideration of the two Nawabs' conspiracy against the British Government as Mill. (Vol. vi. pp. 217-244). His writings on the subject deserve the careful study of all interested in the history of British India.

As long as Oomdat-ul-Omra was alive, there was no chance for the Marquess Wellesley to wrest the Carnatic from him. But the Nawab's death occurred soon and this golden opportunity was taken advantage of by the Governments of India and Madras, a new treaty was imposed on his successor, by which he was made to transfer the civil and military administration of his territories to the hands of the East India Company.

The annexation of the Carnatic was not welcome to those who fed themselves by usury and fleecing the rulers of that principality by advancing loans to them. The number of such harpies was by no means a small one in England. So it was not un-

* *Ibid.*, p. 246.

† The Empire of India, pp. 107-108.

natural for them to influence some of the members of Parliament to take up the cause of the Nawab of the Carnatic; for they found their occupation gone.

On Tuesday, May 17, 1808, Sir Thomas Turton moved his resolutions respecting the deposition of the Nawab. It was after the death of Omdut-ul-Omrah in 1801 that those disgraceful transactions commenced which ended in the annexation of that State.

"On the 5th of July, 1801, Colonel M'Neil advanced to the palace of Chepauk with troops, under pretence of preventing commotion at the death of Omdut ul Omrah. On their entrance the old monarch, labouring under the disorder which in eight days after terminated his existence, sprung from his bed and begged of Major Grant not to expose him to the contempt of his subjects, by penetrating into the interior of his palace; and Major Grant applied for instructions to Col. M'Neil, who from motives of humanity, did not enter. The troops, however, remained, surrounding the palace from the 5th to the 15th, when Omdut ul Omrah died, to all appearance in perfect amity with the Company. At no period were our dominions in India more quiet and secure than at the time when this outrage was committed, under the pretence of guarding against a petty commotion. On the same day on which the old monarch died, the prince, his heir, was dragged from his apartment, and called upon to answer to certain interrogatories, on a charge of treachery preferred against hir father. He was told that his father and grandfather had carried on a treacherous correspondence with Hyder Ali and Tipoo Sultan, and that he, though innocent, was to be deprived of his dominions and reduced to the situation of a private person, where he expected to be a sovereign; that his succession would be set aside, and another placed on the musnad, unless he complied with certain requisitions, . . . Among the expedients tried in order to procure the prince's consent, intimidation was one. Troopers with drawn swords paraded before the tent in which one of the conferences was held, ... The prince, however, still continued to rely upon the faith and protection of the Company, and was at last told to prepare to receive the final resolution of the Governor-General, which was, that his future situation would be that of a private person considered as hostile to the British interests. . . . . . . When the commissioners had set aside the prince, one would have thought that they would have applied to the next in succession; but no: they passed over two and opened a negotiation with Azum ul Dowlah, who from his situation, they imagined, would be most likely to comply with all their requisitions. He, as was usual in that country, had been kept in confinement and, when taken out, was greatly frightened, lest they were going to kill him."

He accepted all the terms dictated to him by the British Government and on the 28th of July, 1801, was placed on the *masnad.*

In referring to the death of the rightful heir, the aforesaid speaker said:

"The rightful prince was, from the 15th of July, 1801, to the day of his death, confined with his mother in the palace of Chepauk, which was his own private property; but where, notwithstanding, Azum resided."—He "dwelt upon the imprudence and indecency of placing the prince in the same palace with the usurper, and stated that, 'as soon as Mr. Addington heard of it, orders had been sent out to remove him. . . . . the unhappy man, after several ineffectual petitions to be removed, had written a letter, in which he strongly pleaded for being sent to another palace, instead of being kept constantly in the power of the usurper, who had only to commit one act to finish his crimes. This proved prophetical; for the prince not long after died of a dysentery. He would not take upon himself absolutely to affirm, that there was something unfair in this transaction, but he would say, that he believed there was. In these transactions he could discern nothing of the British character. The moment they passed the Cape, he believed, with Mr. Burke, that they unbaptized themselves; and that when they landed in India, they became something like the upas tree, described by a Swedish traveller, that blasted and destroyed everything that came within the reach of its pernicious influence."

Then he refuted the charge of conspiracy against the late Nawabs and said:

"And even supposing that Wallajah or Omdut-ul-Omrah, had been guilty of the alleged offences, what ground did his actions afford for the punishment of the son of the latter; and the grandson of the former ?"

In concluding his masterly speech, he

"conjured the house by the national honour and faith, of which it was the guardian ; he conjured his Majesty's ministers in the name of the national character, of which they were the protectors ; he conjured every man in the name of that eternal justice which was the foundation of our happiness here and hereafter, to consider the importance of the vote which he was to give this evening."

But his speech had no effect on the majority of the members of the House. An indecent partisan of the Company and Lord Wellesley quoted the opinion of a jurist justifying the punishment meted out to the rightful Prince of the Carnatic for the alleged crime of his father and grandfather. That authority had written that

"It is one of the first principles of general equity laid down by the writers on that law, that, an heir or successor, from the very circumstance of his possessing the inheritance, is not only bound for the engagements of the person whom he succeeds, but cannot be discharged from the obligation to repair the damage which the deceased may have occasioned by his crimes or offences ; neither under the pretext that he derives no benefit from these crimes or offences, nor because there may have been no accusation or condemnation against the deceased."*

It is not necessary to discuss this legal aspect of the case. If the case was so strong against the rightful Prince of the Carnatic as the friends of Lord Wellesley tried to make out, why was not that Prince tried before a court of justice for his serious offences ? Mr. Sheridan very justly remarked that it had been

"said that Ally Hussain had forfeited his right to the throne, in as much as he inherited the treason of his father. He could never have been a party to a treason which had not been communicated to him, and with which the father had not been charged in his life-time. He never knew a more monstrous attempt than this to impose on the credulity of the public."

But the so-called hon'ble members of the House were not guided by any sense of justice or fairplay in their consideration of the conduct of Marquess Wellesley to the rightful Prince of the Carnatic. They paid no heed to what Sir Samuel Romilly said :

"For the honour of the British character, he was grieved to witness such a division as had just taken place. Of late years many wicked and designing men had, by their writings and actions, endeavoured to bring the parliament of the countay into contempt. They had maliciously attempted to bring disgrace on the legislature of the Empire ; but he would seriously ask, whether all such persons could do, or any species of malice or abuse, had one-thousandth part of the effect of such a circumstance as this going out on a question which involved the national character in the nearest degree for policy, justice, and humanity, with only four or five members more than was absolutely requisite to decide on the most unimportant business. The papers now before them would be read and considered by future ages. . . . . It would then be seen they had not the manliness to adopt and applaud those measures, but that they endeavoured to get rid of a decision upon them by miserable previous questions and other unworthy expedients. It would be seen that the very confidential ministers of the crown had never delivered their opinions on these vast objects of policy and justice, and those who read the story would wonder what subject could possibly be of sufficient importance for them to speak upon. They would be in amaze, and merely at a loss to divine how they came repeatedly to

* Domat's *Compendium of Civil and Public Law.*

vote with willing majorities on so great a question, without ever having the condescension to express their sentiments, or offer their reasons for so determining."

The worthy Baronet might have perhaps preached with more success to a gang of robbers and cut-throats to be virtuous, honest and god-fearing than exhorting the members of the Parliament then sitting to do justice to a non-Christian Prince.

Mr. Windham, who followed Sir Samuel Romilly, spoke the truth when he said that "really from a sort of despondence he entertained that any arguments which could be offered could have any weight with the majority of the house, who seemed, in opposition to reason and evidence, disposed to pass a vote rather of approbation than censure. . . . . . the policy of the East India Company in India, reminded him of the last line of a song, written by Dr. Swift for a highwayman, 'Every man round may rob if he pleases'. . . . . the principle by which we were to be guided, was that the natives of India had no rights, that we had no duties, and that all was to depend upon the decision of our majesties."

But the majority not only rejected the Resolution censuring the conduct of Lord Wellesley for his transaction in the Carnatic, but passed a resolution approving of that conduct.

CHAPTER XX

ANNEXATION OF TANJORE

Tanjore was a small Maratha principality in Southern India which dated its existence from the middle of the seventeenth century. It is not necesary here to mention in detail how it came to be established by the exertions of Sivaji's father, Shahji and his half-brother, Venkoji. In *The Rise of the Maratha Power,* Mr. Ranade has mentioned the reason of the failure of this principality as due to its not forming a part of the Maratha Confederacy: for, according to him, "the strength of the Maratha power lay essentially in its union as a confederacy."*

Venkoji made Tanjore the capital of his dominion in Southern India in 1675 and ruled here till his death in 1687.

In 1676, Shivaji led an expedition to Southern India and his progress could not be checked by Venkoji. The latter resolved to leave his territory and turn a hermit. But Shivaji dissuaded him from doing so. Ranade is of opinion that Shivaji committed a mistake in yielding to the importunities of his step-brother. He writes:

"Shivaji at this time generously yielded all his claims to his father's patrimony to satisfy his brother. This generosity had the desired effect, and Venkoji continued to be in charge of his principality down to the time of his death. In the interest of the Maratha Confederacy it would certainly have been better if Shivaji had strengthened his hold in these parts at this time. By his abandonment of the kingdom to Venkoji, he cut off this settlement from its proper place in the united Maratha kingdom, and Tanjore suffered grievously by reason of this isolation."†

It was a great mistake on the part of the Tanjore princes to have sought the alliance of the English. How the latter treated the "heathen" principality is thus described by Torrens, in his *Empire in Asia.*§

"Among the earliest allies of the English on the Coromandel Coast, was the Raja of Tanjore. In 1742, the reigning prince had been deposed by domestic revolution, and Pratap Sing obtained the throne. The authorities at Madras, having no concern in the event, acknowledged the new prince without hesitation. Their correspondence with him was continued without any interruption, and mutual expressions of fidelity and confidence were interchanged for more than seven years. At the end of this period Sahujee, the exiled Raja, solicited their aid in effecting a counter revolution. He offered, by way of recompense, if they should succeed, to grant them the Fort and Jaghire of Devicottah, and undertook to pay all expenses of the war. They accepted the offer. Pratap was their ally; they had recently sought his assistance against the French; they had no pretence of provocaton to urge against him: nevertheless they despatched an army to dethrone him. The expedition failed, but a second was resolved on. "They determind, however," says their apologist Malcolm, "that the capture of Devicottah, not the restoration of Sahujee, should be their first object." The fort was accordingly invested and taken. And no sooner was this accomplished, than they entered into a negotiation with Pratap Sing,—agreed to desist from all further hostilities—not only to

* P. 238.

† *Ibid.,* p. 246.

§ Pp. 20-21, Panini Office reprint.

abandon him for whom they pretended to have heretofore fought, but engaged to secure his person and to receive a fixed sum for his maintenance, on condition of being suffered to remain undisputed masters of Devicottah and the circumjacent territory. This was the beginning of the conquest of Hindoostan."

In his brochure on "The Tanjore Maratha Principality in Southern India," Mr. William Hickey writes:

"In all their transactions of whatever kind and character these Rajas have displayed such rectitude as could have been the result only of right principle, by which, it was consequently manifest, they were influenced. And so it happened that when the British entered Southern India, and wished to settle in this country, their staunchest and truest friends were the Rajas of Tanjore. Confident of the trustworthiness of the English, the rulers of this district, with the implicit reliance in the good faith of the British, entrusted them with the management of their territories without any reservation whatever."*

Writes Mr. Ranade:

"Throughout these Karnatic wars, the Tanjore army under Mankoji played an important part on the side of the English and against the French.

"Notwithstanding all these sacrifices made by the Tanjore Rajas in helping the cause of the English, the Nawab Mahomed Ali cherished a grudge against Tanjore, which was noted for its riches, and the interposition of the English alone succeeded in 1762 in establishing an understanding by which the Raja became a tributary of the Nabob, with an English guarantee, and agreed to pay four lakhs as tribute. Later on, in 1771, the Nabob secured the help of the Madras Government in attacking Tulsaji, the son of Pratap Sing, and Tulsaji had to sue for peace, which involved him and his State in heavy money liabilities, and curtailed still more the resources of the Tanjore State. In their second treaty the interests of the Raja of Tanjore were completely sacrificed to the greed of Mahomed Ali, and of his English creditors, who dictated the policy of the Madras Government. The guarantee of 1762, by which the English had undertaken to be responsible for the autonomy of Tanjore, was thrown to the winds. In 1773, further acts of spoliation were renewed by the Nabob with the help of his English allies; and the Raja was taken prisoner, his city was captured, and his territory was annexed by the Nabob to his own kingdom. All these acts of spoliation and breach of faith had been undertaken by the Madras Government on their own responsibility, and in the interests of the English creditors of the Nabob."†

What a pity, knowing the perfidious nature of those foreigners, the Tanjore princes contracted alliance with them!

The first Treaty of alliance was in the year 1787, which consisted of 16 articles and bound the Raja of Tanjore and the East India Company in perpetual friendship. This reaty was made a ground for the imposition of the next treaty of 1793, because "the resources of the said country of Tanjore are not competent to enable the said Raja to perform the stipulations in the said engagements." This annulled the Treaty of 1787. The ruler of Tanjore with whom this Treaty was made was Raja Amar Sing. He was made to pay a large sum of money to the East India Company for the defence of his country.

Raja Amar Sing was a half-brother of Raja Tuljajee, who had no male issue and adopted Sarbojee a short time before his death. Amar Sing succeeded his half-brother

P. 2.

Ibid., pp. 250-251.

as Raja of Tanjore. The adoption of Sarbojee was at that time considered invalid, because it was not in conformity with Hindu Law.

But Sarbojee was placed under the guardianship of a well-known Christian missionary, named Revd. Mr. Swartz. He took so great an interest in his ward, that he did not remain content till he got him elevated to the throne of Tanjore, replacing his uncle Amar Sing. Mill very truly writes :

"In the year 1798, a convenient discovery was made; that Amar Sing was not the legal heir to the *musnud* of Tanjore, but Sarbojee, the adopted son of Tuljajee. The question of the rights of these two princes remains in obscurity." (Vol. vi, p. 216).

Horace Hayman Wilson, as usual, differs from the just view of the case expressed by Mill as quoted above. But his note does not convince any intelligent person that Mill was wrong in his opinion on this important question. Of course, Revd. Mr. Swartz and the Christian Resident at the court of the Raja of Tanjore were acting on the saying, "Give a dog a bad name in order to hang him." It was, therefore, that they represented to the Madras Government that Sarbojee was being cruelly treated by Raja Amar Sing. H. H. Wilson writes in the note referred to above :

"The cruel treatment of Sarbojee by the Raja was repeatedly brought to the notice of the British authorities by the vigilance of his reverend guardian; and upon his representations and those of the Resident, the Madras Government insisted upon the removal of Sarbojee and the surviving widows of Tuljajee, who were also objects of the Raja's oppression, to Madras."

After the removal of Sarbojee to Madras, intrigues were carried on with him. An appeal was made to Government against its former decision. It is a well-known thing in India that some learned Pandits of Benares and Nadia can be made to give any opinion on Hindu Law by presents of suitable gifts or fees to them. So now the adoption of Sarbojee, which had been very correctly declared invalid by the learned Hindu jurists, was to be enforced because some "Pandits of learning and character,... interpreted the law in favour of adoption."*

But the Christian Government of the day did not remove Amar Sing from the *musnad* of Tanjore and place Sarbojee on it out of disinterested motives. The new Raja was made to enter into a new treaty with them which made him part with his ancestral dominion and accept the position of a mere pensioner. His jurisdiction was to extend only to the Fort of Tanjore. Thus this Maratha prince was placed in the same category with the Muhammadan Nawab of the Carnatic. Amar Sing was deposed without being given an opportunity to answer the charges against him. The authorities in England ordered "the appointment of a Commission to examine and report on the real state of the country of Tanjore,.....as a step preparatory to the ultimate measure of placing Sarbojee upon the Musnud."†

But Wellesley was opposed to the appointment of such a Commission, for he wrote :

"I am convinced that while a large portion of the country shall remain in the hands of the present Raja, and while his authority shall be acknowledged to be lawful, the inquiries of such a commission would be embarrassed in every shape, and frustrated in the end, and that the final result would

* *Ibid.*, vi, p. 217 (footnote).

† Wellesley's Despatches, I. 41.

prove equally prejudicial to the interests of Sarbojee and highly injurious to the prosperity and happiness of the people of Tanjore."*

So poor Raja Amar Sing was condemned unheard. That gallant soldier, Sir David Baird, looked upon Raja Amar Sing as "the undoubted heir" to the throne of Tanjore and Sarbojee as "an unknown foundling", and accused the Governor-General and the East India Company of their arbitrary exercise of bare-faced power in dethroning the former.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XX

It is a great pity that Mill was not in possession of all the facts of the case when he wrote his History; for the Life and Correspondence of Sir David Baird had not then seen the light of day. But the editor of his work, Horace Hayman Wilson, was dishonest in not mentioning the manner in which the Resident Mr. Alexander Macleod and the Christian missionary, Revd. Mr. Swartz, were conspiring against Raja Amar Sing. No Christian writer of Indian History has done justice to that unfortunate "heathen" Prince, whose great fault was that he did not like to part with his earthly possessions so greatly coveted by his British allies, who, after allowing him to reign for about a decade, discovered that he was illegitimate and hence must be deposed from his *masnud* "The pretext of the muddied stream was always nigh at hand with the official wolves."

In Vol. I (pp. 119. *et seq*) of the *Life of General, the Right Honourable Sir David Baird, Bart,* published from London in 1832, has been mentioned the cruel treatment the Raja Amar Singh received from the Madras Government and their Resident at his Court. It is stated there that

"The Rajah of Tanjore (Amar Singh) was a man of extremely good character and high principle and exceedingly well disposed towards the British Government. He had been placed by Sir Archibald Campbell on the *musnud* on the death of his brother, who left only an adopted son. . . . . . Colonel Baird, (on the 23rd of October, 1794, addressed Lord Hobart, the Governor of Fort St. George, ... stating that upon the abolition of the civil residency at Tanjore, the senior military officer . . . . . . had always acted as civil resident, added, that he should feel gratified by being so considered, ... the request, however, was not acceded to, and shortly after the office of civil resident was revived in the person of Mr. M— of the Honourable East India Company's service. "Mr. M—had not long assumed the functions of his office before the Rajah, who had a warm affection for and an implicit confidence in Colonel Baird, began to complain bitterly of his conduct, which he represented as not only disrespectful, but positively harsh; and in the course of time, circumstances gradually transpired which convinced, not only the Rajah, but Colonel Baird himself, that this Civil Servant of the Honourable East India Company had been placed at the court of Tanjore for no other purpose than that of inducing, or even (if necessary), compelling, the unfortunate Rajah to give up his territory and become a pensioner of the said Honourable East India Company for the remaining term of the natural life.

". . . . . . the Honourable East India Company was not exceedingly scrupulous as to the means tby which territory was to be acquired; and Mr. M—'s proceedings in furtherance of the object

* *Ibid.*, p. 47.

of his mission at length became so evident and so oppressive to the Rajah, that his highness stated to Colonel Baird that Mr. M— was far exceeding the just limits of his duty ; . . . . it was perfectly clear that the primary object of his (Mr. M—'s) mission was to make new terms with the Rajah while under the influence of fear."

At 7 p. m. of 28th December, 1795, the Resident wrote to Baird to order a company of his regiment to march with all possible expedition and halt near the gate of the palace to follow such directions as the Resident might give them.

Baird sent the troops, which on reaching the spot, received a verbal message from the Resident that they might go.

The next morning, Baird wrote to the Resident that in future he would not comply with any requisition from him for troops, unless he was at the same time made acquainted with the nature of the service to be performed, to enable him to judge what force would be adequate to the execution of it. He also forwarded the correspondence to Lord Hobart, the Governor of Madras. Writes the biographer whom we have quoted so often before, that

"This course of proceeding, which Colonel Baird felt it his duty to adopt, was very much at variance with that which the Honourabre East India Company considered most conducive to its interests, and the abrupt conduct of Mr. M—was justified and supported "by the authorities of Madras."

"Thus encouraged in his pretensions, and supported in his operations against the unfortunate Rajah, it is not to be supposed that Mr. M— lost any time in exhibiting the power and authority with which he was invested, and accordingly, on the 23rd of January (1796), he addressed *several letters* to Colonel Baird.

"In the first, he says, 'In consequence of instructions which I have received from government, I beg leave to require, in their name, that you give orders, so that neither Shiverow, the Rajah's Sirkeel, nor either of his brothers, Trimbjee or Shankerow, be permitted to pass out of the fort.*

In the "Story of Satara," I have narrated the manner in which the Resident at Satara was practising refined brutalities on the unfortunate Raja Pratap Singh. The Christian Resident at Tanjore was perpetrating brutalities of the same nature on the unfortunate Raja Amar Singh, who

"communicated to Colonel Baird, that at the dictation of that most zealous minister, Mr. M—, and under the positive influence of fear, he had been induced, on the preceding evening (24th January 1796), to sign a document, ceding the whole of his territory to the management of the Honourable East India Company ; but that considering how much he had been alarmed by threats, and how grossly deceived by misstatetements, he resolved to address the Governor-General, and appeal to him for the restoration of his country.

"From this determination, he was certainly not discouraged by Colonel Baird, who was so deeply impressed with the justice of his claims, and the rectitude of his intentions, that he himself forwarded a copy of the correspondence. . . . . to Sir John Shore, at Calcutta. . . . .

"As far as the Rajah was concerned, his own remonstances, coupled with the explanations and statements of Colonel Baird, induced the Governor-General to order restoration to be made ;† and so

* *Ibid.*, p. 126.

† "The Governor-General was not tempted by the value of the prize to overlook the means by which it had been secured. He observed, that the Rajah had been intimidated into compliance by the repeated calling out of British troops, even after he had consented to the dismissal of his Minister —that the employment of Mr. Swartz, the avowed protector of the Rajah's competitor and public impeacher of his title, as Interpreter in the transaction, had been injudicious—that the punctuality of

far Colonel Baird succeeded to the full extent of his wishes, and had the gratification of seeing his much injured friend reinstated in his rights and sovereignty; but even in this unwilling act of justice, there were quibbles and delays, the meanness of which, if they were minutely examined, would astonish the reader. Amongst others, Mr. M—,having received orders to replace the Rajah in possession of his territories, refused to do so, unless he became security for whatever *private debts* his people might owe to British subjects."*

The author then has given the reply of the Raja to the resident, which translated literally into English by an Indian employee of his, is a specimen of what some Anglo-Indian publicists have labelled "Baboo English."

The Madras Government did not like the interest which Colonel Baird took in the Raja's affairs. Therefore to punish him, he was removed with his regiment from Tanjore.

The Raja was also to be punished. The author of the biography of Baird writes :

"The Rajah was devoted, and ere long, added another proof, to the many already existing, that whenever policy or aggrandisement seemed to warrant the measure, a pretext was never wanting to the *Honourable* East India Campany, to remove a native prince."†

Colonel Baird was ordered for service at the Cape of Good Hope, for which he embarked on the 17th of October, 1797. His biographer writes :

"By his conscientious partisanship in the cause of the Rajah, and by the earnestness with which he had espoused the cause of that unhappy prince, he had made an implacable enemy of Lord Hobart and the Madras government; for, in consequence of Colonel Baird's letter on the subject, to Calcutta, having been much spoken of, Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, called for the official correspondence which had occurred respecting Tanjore; and it is clear that Sir John's subsequent reprobation of the conduct which had been observed towards the Rajah, was, as has been already suggested, the real cause of the removal of Colonel Baird, by Lord Hobart, who had encouraged if not originated all the measures of the resident."§

Colonel Baird arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in December 1797, and was appointed by the Governor, Lord Macartney, as Brigadier General. A few months afterwards, Lord Mornington, on his way to India, touched and stayed at the Cape for a while. The Governor-General *elect*

"was extremely anxious to obtain from General Baird whatever information he could, with respect to the state of India when he quitted it; . . . . . .

"Upon the subject of the Tanjore country (one particularly exciting to General Baird), Lord Mornington's inquiries were extremely numerous and minute, and General Baird discovered, in the course of their conversations on this topic, ... that his lordship actually carried out with him definite orders relative to its settlement, founded, of course, upon the representations which had been made to Leadenhall Street; and he was naturally anxious to ascertain the probable fate of the oppressed Rajah, and whether he was to be eventually permitted the quiet enjoyment of his own territories. "Having candidly expressed his own opinion, General Baird, with his accustomed frankness, inquired of Lord Mornington what were really the intentions of the Honourable East India

the Rajah's payments had precluded all pretext for taking possession of his territory—that if maladministration of mortgaged districts could justify the forfeiture of them, the British Government might lay claim equally to Oude and to Travancore; and he concluded by declaring, that justice and policy alike prescribed the rescinsion of the treaty, and the restoration of the ceded district to the Nabob (? Rajah), whatever embarrassments might result from the proceeding." (*Life of Lord Teignmouth*, Vol. I. p. 356).

* *Loc. cit.* pp. 130 and 131.

† *Ibid.*, p. 138.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

Company upon this important and delicate matter ; but Lord Mornington stated that he felt himself bound not to answer General Baird's questions at that period, the decision of the Court of Directors being only known to himself and the Secret Committee.

"This diplomatic avoidance of giving him any information, General Baird too justly construed into an unfavourable result for the Rajah. What the specific instructions from Leadenhall Street actually were, General Baird never discovered ;* but Lord Mornington had not long been in India, before, as usual, a pretext was formed, and the *adopted son* of the Rajah's elder brother was placed on the *musnad*, although his claims, which had been formally and carefully investigated long before, had been disallowed by Sir Archibald Campbell and all the lawyers at Madras.

"But what have legal decisions in India to do with strokes of State policy ? Or who shall be of sufficient importance to stop the progress of a resolution of the secret committee of the East India directors? Interest declared for the possession of Tanjore—justice upheld the claims of the Rajah, the undoubted heir, the legally acknowledged prince, the actual possessor of the territories. But when the Honourable East India Company discovered that this prince, who had sense enough to resist their usurpation of his rights, until actually frightened by British bayonets (how misused !) into an opposite line of conduct, was, in his present state, not sufficiently subservient to their will, the claims of the *adopted son* were again seriously brought forward and admitted ; and an unknown foundling was placed on the Rajah's throne, upon condition that he would cede the revenue of his country to the Company, and become their pensioner for the rest of his precarious life."†

Revd. Mr. Swartz evidently belonged to that class of missionaries regarding whom I have elsewhere § written :

"Christian missionaries who are sent out to heathen lands do not seem to care so much for the welfare of the souls of the dark-skinned races as to bring those lands under the subjugation, o Christian powers by stirring up troubles in those lands. Thus in the *Saturday Review* of July 10, 1880, in an article under the title of 'Flogging Missionaries' it is said :' Almost all our recent "little wars" have sprung, more or less directly, from the enterprise of missionaries. The Abyssinian affair was caused by missionaries. Missionaries spread the reports about Cetewayo's cruelty and contempt of the Sabbath day, which at least hastened the inevitable encounter with the Zulus. A missionary complicated the relations of the late Government with the Porte, and missionaries have interfered pretty freely with the domestic Royal quarrels which keep Burmah in hot water."

In India at least, some Christian missionaries play the part of emissaries, spies and informers, as is evident from the conduct of the Revd. Dr. Wilson of Bombay (See my "Story of Satara," Appendix H, p. 492).

So the reports spread by Revd. Mr. Swartz regarding the cruelties and oppressions of Raja Amar Singh should be greatly discredited. The Resident at his Court, Mr. Alexander Macleod, had Mr. Swartz to support him in his conspiracy against the Raja. This is clear from the letter of Colonel Baird to Lord Hobart, dated Tanjore, 24th January, 1796 , in which, after stating that he complied with the instructions of the Government in furnishing the troops requisitioned by the Resident, he wrote

"(I) went myself to Mr. M.————, whom I found at the house of Mr. Swartz, and endeavoured toprevail on him not to employ the troops, etc."**

The fertile province of Tanjore excited the cupidity of the Christian merchant "adventurers" so much that they did not scruple to adopt any means to get possession of it.

* "In reference to Tanjore, the Directors sanctioned Lord Hobart's Treaty with the Rajah." (*Life of Lord Teignmouth*, Vol. I, p. 392, footnote).

† *Ibid.*, pp. 160-162.

§ *History of Education in India under the rule of the East India Company*, pp. 207-208.

** *Loc. cit*, p. 129.

CHAPTER XXI

ANNEXATION OF SURAT

The English established their first factory in India in Surat. It is not necessary here to enter into details respecting the early history of the English in their Presidency of Surat, and their double dealings with and behaviour towards the people of that place. This has been very well described by Revd. Mr. Anderson in his work on *"The English in Western India."*

The English ascendancy commenced by the capture of Surat in 1759 by fraud rather than by force. The author of the Surat Volume of the Bombay Gazetteer, in a footnote to p. 127, writes that

> "Stavorinus states that one of the Sidhi officers was paid by the English to arrange that no resistance should be made to the English on their attack on the Castle. He hints also that the same means were used to prevent Mr. Taillefort, the director of the Dutch company, from joining in the struggle."

But the Governors of Surat were still Musalmans and thus there was divided rule. All the evil effects of divided rule were visible in that unhappy land. One Mr. Parsons, writing in 1777, said :

> "the government of Surat is, with reason, called double. For instance, should the French, Portuguese, or Dutch ask for alteration of duties or increase of privileges, if the English chief is disinclined to grant their request he tells them to ask the Nawab, at the same time communicating to the Nawab what answer to give · · · · · They all understand the farce."*

The Musalman governor was merely a puppet in the hands of the English, for all the power centred in their hands. Thus Stavorinus, a Dutch traveller, wrote in 1774 :

> "The English give laws to all, neither Europeans nor Indians can do anything without their specia approbation. The governor of the city does not in this respect differ from the lowest inhabitant. He must obey their commands, although they show him externally some honour, and will not in public allow that he is subservient to them."†

Under this farce of double government, four so-called "independent" Nawabs ruled in Surat from 1759 to 1799. But now Lord Mornington was the Governor-General of India and he wanted to bring Surat under the direct control of the East India Company. The spend-thrift Company of Christian "adventurers" found it difficult to make both ends meet in their administration of the affairs of Surat. Therefore, it was considered expedient by them to wring concessions from the Nawab. With this end in view, they pressed him to adopt two measures,—one to reform the government in the city and the other to enlarge the English receipts. The Nawab was asked to disband his own troops and employ three battalions of the Company and assign the English funds for their

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* Quoted in a footnote, Surat *Gazetteer*, p.129.

† *Ibid.*, p. 129.

maintenance. But the Musalman Nawab turned a deaf ear to the importunities of the Christian schemers.

But he was so greatly pressed by the English for concessions, that at last he yielded to their importunities and consented to pay them a lakh of rupees annually and allow them certain concessions to the amount of more than 30,000 rupees a year. This treaty was not concluded when he died on the 8th January, 1799. He left behind an infant son who died a month afterwards. The brother of the late Nawab, by name Nasir-ud-din, claimed the government of Surat. The new Nawab

"consented to pay a lac of rupees annually but perseveringly insisted that beyond that sum the revenues of the place would not enable him to go. After every mode of importunity was exhausted, and every species of inquiry was made, Mr. Seton (the chief at Surat) became satisfied; that his statement was just, and on the 18th of August, 1799, wrote to the Governor of Bombay, in the following words : "I have left nothing undone ; and pressed him to the utmost. I am convinced he has not the means, or believe he really would pay more. Poor Mr. Farmer has been led into a false opinion of the resources of Surat ; and I could almost venture to stake my life on it, that more than the lac is not to be got by any means short of military force. Take the Government from the family and pension them (though such a measure would, in my humble opinion, be contrary to good faith), I scarcely believe, after all endeavours, that the Company with these pensions, and the increased necessary establishments, would be more in pocket, than they will now with their present establishment and this donation. What were the views of the Company in possessing themselves of the castle? Whatever they were, they are not altered, and they were then satisfied with the castle, and tunka revenue, which is only diminished from a decrease of trade; and here a lac is unconditionally offered which exceeds the amount of castle and Tunka revenue by 25,000 rupees per annum ; yet the present government are not satisfied therewith, and still want more ; which cannot be raised, if the Nabob does not squeeze it out of the subjects."*

But the Christian Governor-General was not going to show any consideration for the Musalman Nawab of Surat. The sound argument of Mr. Seton had no weight with him. In his despatch dated Feb. 18th, 1800, he wrote to the Honourable Jonathan Duncan, Governor of Bombay :

"Having fully considered your several communications relative to the affairs of Surat, I have directed a despatch to be prepared on that subject for my signature in Council together with the draft of a Treaty to be concluded with Nussur-ud-Deen previous to confirming him in the station of Nabob.

"Being convinced that it is not only the complete right, but the positive duty of the British Government to secure the external defence, as well as the internal order and good government of the City of Surat ; and being satisfied that the original Treaty between the Company and the Nabob Moyen-ud-Deen presents no obstacle to any conditions requisite to the permanent establishment of these important and salutary objects, I am resolved not to confirm Nusser-ud-Deen in the station of Nabob, until he shall have agreed to transfer the whole civil and military administration and revenues of the city into the hands of the Company ; reserving to himself an annual stipend sufficient for the maintenance of himself and his family, to be paid by the Company from the revenues of Surat."†

So the Musalman Nawab was to be pensioned by the Christian Governor-General —a step which, Mr. Seton was of opinion and with him also all right thinking persons,

* Mill, 6th Vol. pp. 207-208.

† Wellesley, II. pp. 222-23.

was contrary to good faith. But the Governor-General was afraid of the Naweb not transferring his authority to the Company without resistance. So he wrote to Mr. Duncan:

"I think it will be advisable that you should proceed in person to Surat for the purpose of concluding this important arrangement. I shall not, however, suggest this measure in my letter in Council, but you will understand my decided opinion to be, that, without your presence at Surat, the proposed reform cannot be carried into effect.

"You will, therefore, proceed without delay to add two regiments of native infantry to your establishment.

"It is also my desire, that you should immediately increase the force at Surat to one Company of European artillery, two Companies of European infantry, and one complete regiment of native infantry.

"You will observe, that it is desirable that this force should precede your arrival at Surat."*

So after all the Nawab had a treaty forced on him which made him part with his territory. In the language of Christian occidental diplomacy, "The friendship subsisting between the Honourable English Company and the Nawab Nasar-ud-Din Khan, &c. &c. &c., is hereby strengthened and confirmed," &c.

The Governor-General in Council transmitted the Treaty to the Governor-in-Council of Bombay, "on the 10th of March, 1800," and it "was ultimately agreed to, without any alteration, by the Nabob of Surat, on the 13th May, 1800."†

Thus the Nawab was displaced.§

Regarding this transaction, writes Mill:

"Though stripped of all the powers of government, and a mere pensioner of State, it was still accounted proper for Meer Nasseer-ud-Deen to act the farce of royalty. His succession to the musnud of his ancestors was now acknowledged by the English government, and he was placed on it with the same pomp and ceremony, as if he was receiving all the powers of sovereignty, on the day after he had for ever resigned them."**

* *Ibid.*, p. 223.

* *Ibid.*, p. 709.

† Regarding the passing of Surat entirely into the hands of the English, the *Calcutta Review* for June, 1848, says :—

"In the year 1800, by one of those strokes of injustice, which have too often accompanied our acquisition of power in India, and for which expediency has been the wretched plea, the East India Company took the whole administration of Surat affairs into their own hands. Any impartial person who will take the trouble to investigate this affair, will find that the helpless Nawab had reason on his side, the English force and sophistry."

** Mill, 6th Vol., p. 211.

CHAPTER XXII

HOW THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY ENSNARED THE PESHWA.

The story of the manner in which the Marathas have been all along treated by the British forms a black chapter in Indian history. An English gentleman who once occupied a very prominent place in the Bombay Civil Service wrote :

"We now arrive at the Mahratta raj, which is closely coupled with the earlier days of the British. However fairly told, there is much for the English to be ashamed of in this period."*

But British writers, as a rule, have not scrupled to make out the Marathas as the delinquent party. The allegations which they have though fit to make against the Hindus of the Deccan, will hardly stand the scrutiny of any thoughtful writer ; yet from generation to generation, vile calumnies against the Marathas have been allowed to be very widely published.

No historian has as yet taken the trouble to unfold the manner in which the British treated the Marathas. We have to read between the lines of the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington ; and what a flood of light these shed on their black and abominable transactions to encompass the ruin of the Marathas !

The First Maratha War was undertaken in the time of Warren Hastings. The first Governor-General of India could have boasted of establishing "Peace with Honour." When he was impeached before the Houses of the English Parliament, in his defence, referring to the transactions of the Maratha affairs during his regime, he said that he had "accomplished a peace and I hope everlasting one, with one great State (the Mahrattas)."

Poor Warren Hastings's hope of "everlasting" peace was not destined to be fulfilled. During his life-time, he witnessed all the three great wars with the Marathas and the last year of his life was synchronous with the last year of the existence of the rule of the Peshwas.

It should be remembered that the Marathas themselves did nothing to disturb the peace with the British.

At the time when Lord Mornington landed in India, Baji Rao was sitting on the Peshwas' *masnad* at Puna. He was destined to be the last of the Peshwas. The great Nana Fadnavis was spending his days in captivity. Disorder and confusion were rapidly setting in and there are reasons to suspect that the Europeans were mainly instrumental in bringing about this state of affairs in the Maratha Empire.

Mahadji Sindhia was succeeded by his grandnephew, Dowlat Rao Sindhia. Tukaji Holkar was dead. The late resident with Mahadji, named Major Palmer, who had since received a step in rank and hence was known as Lieut.-Colonel Palmer, had succeeded Mr. Charles Malet as resident in the court of the Peshwa at Puna. The Europeans seem to have been disappointed with Baji Rao, for they had expected to

* Sir Frederick Lely : History as Taught in Indian Schools, p. 16.

secure many advantages from him. It will be remembered that Raghoba had promised them a good many things and they naturally expected that the son would fulfil the specious promises of his father. But so far Baji Rao had not given them any hopes in that direction.

Lord Mornington had, long before landing in India, made up his mind to go to war with Tipu. In the war which Lord Cornwallis made on that unhappy Muhammadan Prince, the success of the Europeans was mainly to be attributed to the assistance they received through their alliance with the Marathas and the Nizam.*

Although humbled and made to part with half of his dominion, Tipu was still regarded as a formidable enemy. It was not considered possible to attack him without the co-operation or, at least, the neutrality of the other native powers of the Deccan.

Lord Mornington knew that no native power of India would join him in his unjust war with Tipu. So he tried to ensnare the independent sovereign Princes of India with his nefarious scheme of Subsidiary Alliance. In Captain Kirkpatrick at Hyderabad, Lord Mornington found a worthy lieutenant to give effect to his scheme. But the European Resident at the Peshwa's Court, Colonel Palmer, did not succeed in ensnaring the Peshwa.

From the public despatches of Lord Mornington it appears that the Governor-General presumed that the Nizam and the Marathas, in the event of a war with Tipu Sultan, would not be able to render any assistance to the East India Company. As has been already stated, there was never any occasion to call in the aid of any of the allies for defensive purposes against Tipu. Therefore it was absurd for Lord Mornington to make this supposititious inability of the allies to render assistance in arms and men in a defensive war with Tipu as a pretext for robbing them of their independence. It also further appears from his despatches that Lord Mornington never cared to consult the allies as to the advisability of making an unprovoked and aggressive war on Tipu. After having brought the Nizam within the snare of the Subsidiary Alliance, and after his failure in this direction with the Peshwa, Lord Mornington did not consider it necessary to press the Marathas to join him against Tipu.

From the perusal of Lord Mornington's despatches it is evident that he wanted to keep the Marathas neutral rather than seek their co-operation against Tipu. He was also anxious that the Marathas should not join Tipu or invade the territories then under the administration of the British or their allies.

We can understand the reason which prompted Lord Mornington not to press the Peshwa or the Marathas to co-operate with him against Tipu. The Marathas had been always looked upon with jealousy by the Europeans. When Lord Cornwallis had gone to war with Tipu, certain members of the House of Commons called in question the justice and policy of the war. They pointed out "that the Mahrattas were the people from whom in India the greatest danger impended over the interests of England, and that the Mysore sovereign was valuable as a balancing power."

This argument must have carried great weight with the Governor-General in not

* See Mr. Josiah Webb s Memorandum, quoted in Chapter XVII.

seeking the co-operation of the Marathas, for it is certain that any aid from the Marathas, would have been purchased by the cession to them of a portion of the conquered territories of the Mysore sovereign, thus further enhancing the already dangerous power of the Marathas. To do this was not the policy of Lord Mornington. Accordingly he did not press them to co-operate with him against Tipu. That the Marathas were quite capable of rendering military aid to the Company against Tipu will be shown later on.

It was necessary to keep the Marathas neutral. Lord Mornington devised a plan by which he admirably succeeded in gaining this end. The Peshwa Baji Rao was under the guidance of, and dependent upon, Dowlat Rao Sindhia. Without the aid of Dowlat Rao, Baji Rao could never have succeeded in gaining the Peshwa's *masnad.* Grant Duff writes, that Baji Rao "addressed himself to Scindhia, offering him four lakhs of rupees, of territory, and whatever might be the expenses of his troops during the time, he should require their aid in asserting his lawful succession to the *masnad.* This offer was accepted." Lord Wellesley was pleased to describe this position of Baji Rao as one of captivity. But Baji Rao was not such an ill-treated prisoner in the hands of Dowlat Rao as was the unhappy Nizam in the hands of the British. He never complained of his hard fate, if any. He did not ask the British to help him in his difficulties ; he never requested them to loosen the yoke of captivity which Dowlat Rao had placed on his neck. There was a European Resident at his Court. We do not find this person ever making any report to the Governor-General regarding the presumed pitiable condition of the Peshwa. It is not till Lord Mornington made the discovery that the Peshwa was unable to fulfil the conditions of an ally in a defensive war against Tipu that we begin to hear of the Peshwa's situation as that of a prisoner. It was the business of the British Resident to din into the ears of the Peshwa that Sindhia was exercising undue influence over him and thus to make him discontented with his lot. In plain words the Resident opened a campaign of low intrigues against Sindhia. Without detaching the Peshwa from Sindhia, Lord Wellesley found it impossible to ensnare the former.

The Nizam had employed a large number of French officers to discipline and train his army. It was thought that this French influence in the court of the Nizam at Hydarabad was injurious to the British interests in India. It was therefore necessary to bring the Nizam within the sphere of British influence and disband his force officered by the French.

But in the case of the Peshwa, there did not exist the pretext which had served to ensnare the Nizam. The Peshwa did not keep in his employ any French officers to discipline his troops. Therefore it was necessary to invent the pretext that he was under the undue influence of Sindhia, who, of course, kept a large force disciplined and drilled by the French. It was convenient for the British to forget that the Peshwa lay under a deep debt of gratitude to Sindhia, for without the timely aid of the latter, Baji Rao would never have succeeded to the Peshwa's *masnad.* If the British were so very philanthropic as they would seem to make the world believe, why did they not make war at once on Dowlat Rao Sindhia and thus release the Peshwa from his

galling yoke? The Peshwa was their ally and they suffered him to be unduly influenced in all State matters by Sindhia. How different was the course they adopted towards Tipu, when it was suspected that that prince was meditating an attack on their ally, the Raja of Travancore!

Lord Wellesley pined and panted, as it were, to make the Peshwa independent of Sindhia, which in plain terms meant the disruption of the confederacy of the Maratha States. He knew that the Peshwa did not stand in need of any subsidiary force of the British. He knew that Baji Rao was a weak man and thus if he could be once detached from Sindhia and other Maratha confederates, it would not be difficult to rob the Marathas of their independence. With this object in view, he set the Resident at Puna to instill into the mind of the Peshwa the belief that Sindhia was exercising undue influence on him, that all the Maratha confederates were his enemies and that the British alone were his true friends.

As said before, Colonel Palmer was the Resident at Puna when Lord Mornington set his foot on the soil of India. In his first letter to Colonel Palmer, marked private and dated Fort William, 8th July, 1798, Lord Mornington wrote:

"You may be assured that it was a matter of real satisfaction to me that the affairs of this Government at the Court of Poona should be in the hands of a person of your talents and experience in a moment the most critical to our interests. You will learn by my public instructions the nature and extent of the general system of policy with respect to our alliances, which in my judgment the present crisis absolutely demands. I have the fullest confidence in your zeal for promoting the success of a plan which is founded on principles of justice and of all parties to be affected by its execution. There are only a few points which have been omitted in my public instructions, as being more properly subjects of a private communication. If any opportunity should offer of restoring Nana on conditions favourable to our interests and consistent with the general tenor of my instructions, I think that such an event might tend to secure the permanent advantages of the proposed plan."

But before this letter reached Colonel Palmer, Nana Fadnavis had been restored to liberty by Sindhia. So Nana's release was not looked upon with pleasure by the British, because it was not brought about by them 'on conditions favourable to their interests and consistent with the general tenor of Lord Wellesley's instruction.'

The capital of the Peshwa was the scene of many disorders and revolutions. It is impossible for any historian to positively assert the part played by the British in creating these disorders and bringing about these revolutions. But it is not improbable that the Resident at Puna fomented domestic dissensions and court intrigues in order to make the Marathas dependent on the British. It was the policy of Lord Mornington to create disorder and confusion in the dominion of the independent princes of India. Over and over again in his official despatches, he gave instructions to his subordinates 'to take advantage of the disaffection and discontent' that existed in the native states of India, which, of course, as every one knows, is merely a diplomatic expression for fomenting disaffection and discontent. Had not Col. Palmer carried out the policy of Lord Mornington, it is not probable that the Governor-General would have assured him that "it is a matter of real satisfaction to me that the affairs of this Government

at the Court of Puna should be in the hands of a person of your talents and experience in a moment the most critical to our interests."

Nana was once more at the head of the Maratha affairs, and his views regarding the Europeans were well known to all. Moreover, it was not his policy to see the total annihilation of the power of Tipu. When he saw the Nizam ensnared by the British by their nefarious scheme of 'Subsidiary Alliance,' without the knowledge of, and consultation with, the Peshwa's Court, he naturally became anxious as to the future safety and welfare of the Maratha Commonwealth. In a postscript to the letter to Col. Palmer, from which extracts have been given above, Lord Mornington wrote :

"I cautioned you against making any communication to the Peishwa of my intention with respect to the French army at Hyderabad for dispersing the French in small parties, as it is probable that such a dispersion will have taken place before you can receive this despatch. I have given you full liberty to apprize the Peishwa of the nature of the arrangement to be adopted at Hyderabad, feeling that it would be very improper to use any concealment at Poona or at Hyderabad with respect to the real object of the negotiations of either Court."

What greatly offended the Marathas was that the Nizam should have entered into an alliance with the British without previously consulting them. It should be remembered that the Marathas after inflicting the most crushing defeat on the Nizam at Khardla were very magnanimous in their terms of peace with him. As conquerors they did not exact any heavy penalties from their vanquished foe. The Marathas naturally expected the Nizam to be grateful to them. Out of gratitude the Subedar of the Deccan should have, previous to his hugging the English to his breast, given an opportunity to the Peshwa and the Marathas to know the real nature of the alliance he was going to contract with them.

When Nana Fadnavis came to know of the Treaty which the Nizam had concluded with the East India Company he became very anxious about the future independence of the Marathas. At this time he was reconciled to Sindhia, for he owed his liberty to him. The house of Holkar was also at this time subservient to that of Sindhia. Tukaji Holkar died on the 15th August, 1797, leaving

"two legitimate sons, Khasee Rao and Mulhar Rao. Khasee Rao was imbecile both in mind and body, but Mulhar Rao was in every respect qualified to support the fortunes of the house. Disputes soon arose between the brothers, in which the illegitimate sons took the part of Mulhar Rao....Sindhia, on being solicited by Khasee Rao, readily afforded the aid of the body of troops for the purpose of apprehending Mulhar Rao, who, refusing to surrender, was attacked, and maintained a desperate defence until he was killed. His half brothers made their escape—Jeswant Rao to Nagpur, amd Wittoojee to Kolapur." (Grant-Duff, p. 531,)

Thus Sindhia was the most powerful of all the Maratha confederates. He had an interest in maintaining the supremacy of the Marathas in the counsels of the native courts of India, for he had combined with the other Maratha confederates at the battle of Khardla. Nana Fadnavis sought his aid and he succeeded. The Nizam had not as yet fulfilled the terms of the Treaty of Khardla. With his alliance with the British, there was no indication that the Nizam ever meant to pay any attention to the terms of the above Treaty. The British also did not hold themselves responsible for the

Treaty which their ally the Nizam had made with the Marathas. Of course, in his public despatch to Colonel Palmer, dated 8th July, 1798, Lord Mornington wrote:

"You will make a formal tender to the Peishwa in my name of my arbitration between the Courts of Poonah and Hyderabad, and Hyderabad and Scindhia, etc."

But independent States never seek the arbitration of a third party. Moreover, the British never came to the assistance of either the Marathas or the Nizam when they fought the battle of Khardla. This offer of arbitration, therefore, appeared something like a deliberate insult to the great Nana, the Peshwa and Sindhia.

Taking all the circumstances, narrated above, into consideration, the story is not quite impossible that the Marathas intended to make war on the Nizam and to enter into an alliance, offensive and defensive, with Tipu. Colonel Palmer, the resident at Puna, wrote to Lord Mornington on 8th April, 1799, that

"Rubah Ganwar, Vakeel at this Court, has informed Moonshee Fuckeer-ud-deen, with whom he has long been in terms of great friendship and confidence, that having enquired of Jadoo Bauschar the state of affairs at Scindhia's Durbar, Bauschar communicated to him a plan concerted by the Peishwa and Scindhia to attack the Nizam, and eventually to form an alliance with Tippoo Sultan."

How far this story is reliable, it is not possible for the purposes of historical accuracy to positively declare. But there was nothing improbable in this. This shows, if anything, great statesmanship on the part of Sindhia. Sindhia had been smarting under the ill-treatment he had received at the hands of the Governor-General. Lord Mornington wanted that Sindhia should leave Puna, because it was presumed that he was exercising undue influence over the Peshwa and it was also feared that the disciplined corps of Sindhia might render assistance to Tipu if Dowlat Rao remained in the Deccan. Lord Mornington wrote to Colonel Palmer on the 8th July, 1798:

"I have already observed that the present position of the army of Scindhia operates as an effectual assistance to the cause of Tippoo Sultan; if an alliance offensive and defensive had been formally concluded between those two powers, Scindhia could not render a more acceptable service to Tippoo, than he now performs by holding in check both the allies of the Company."

Thus the return of Sindhia to Hindustan was considered a great political necessity. This was effected in a way which brings to prominence the crooked methods employed by the Governor-General in all his dealings with the Indian sovereigns of India. Captain Grant Duff writes:

"The reported designs of Zuman Shah, King of Cabul, and grandson of Ahmad Shah Abdallee, a name terrible to Mahrattas, were strongly set forth by the British agents, in order to induce Scindhia to return for the protection of his dominions in Hindustan."*

Mill writes:

"In 1798, a belief, but solely derived from rumour, of vast preparations making by the Afghan, for the invasion of India, was excited anew. The apprehensions, however, of the British government were allayed, by intelligence received toward the end of September, that the disturbances within the dominions of the Shah had compelled him to leave his capital and march to Kandahar. But this

* P. 540

was speedily followed by reports, that the 10th of October was fixed for commencing his march from Cabul towards Hindustan ; and though the authenticity of these reports was held very doubtful, the English Government deemed it their duty...........to take every precaution against the possibility of an event, which, combined with the designs of Tippoo and the French, might become of the most serious importance. Endeavours were used to prevail upon Doulat Rao Scindhia to return from the South, and put his dominions in the best posture of defence ; and great hopes were expressed, that he would follow this advice....................The fact appears to be that Scindhia knew the improbability of being invaded by the Shah ; and though such invasion would bring on him greater evils than it would bring on the Government of any other State, he chose to remain at Poona, for the promotion of those objects of which he was there in eager pursuit."*

The English had a purpose to serve by spreading the reported designs of Zemaun Shah. It was not Lord Mornington alone, but his predecessors also had done the same.

Thus Mill writes :

"The threat of Zemaun Shah, King of the Abdallees, or Afghans, became a convenient source of pretexts for urging upon the vizier the projected innovations................The object of the Shah, as announced by rumour, was to re-establish the house of Timur, to which he was nearly related, and restore the true faith in the empire of the Great Moghul."†

It appears to us, that Lord Mornington made use of, if not fabricated, the reported designs of the Afghan sovereign, to go to war with Tipu and to detach Sindhia from assisting Tipu or entering into an alliance with that Muhammadan Prince.

As said before, the threat of Zemaun Shah's reported designs had no effect on Sindhia. He remained in Puna assisting the Peshwa. But if the threat of an invasion from without failed to remove Sindhia from Puna, the creation of disorder within his dominion enabled Lord Mornington to withdraw Sindhia from Puna. Lord Cornwallis had withdrawn the British Resident from the Court of Sindhia. Since then no Englishman represented the interests of the Government of the East India Company at Sindhia's Court. One of the first acts of Lord Mornington was to re-appoint a British Resident at Sindhia's Court. The British had to see the advantages which resulted to them by keeping a resident at the Courts of the native princes of India. These residents have enabled them in gaining power in India which their highly trained and disciplined soldiers and generals would not have succeeded. So Lord Mornington despatched a Resident to Sindhia's Court to carry out his policy. The man chosen for this purpose was one named Colonel Collins.

Sindhia, as said before, was at that time in Puna. Colonel Collins did not go to Puna but to Sindhia's capital in Hindustan. At the time of his taking leave of Lord Mornington that Governor-General gave him some oral instructions. The nature of these instructions is not known. In his letter to Colonel Collins, dated Fort William, 15th September, 1798, Lord Mornington wrote :

"My conversation with you, at Barrackpore, apprized you of my ideas with regard to the objects of your mission.

The question which will demand your immediate attention will be, the best mode of securing the

* VI., pp. 128-130.

† *Ibid.*, p. 125.

strongest barriers against Zemaun Shah, not only with a view to the present moment but to all future contingencies.....

The return of Scindhia to that quarter, attended as such an event must be by the restoration of his power to a considerable degree of efficiency, appears to me to be the best possible means of checking the motions of the Shah; especially as it must ever be the interests of Scindhia (within his own dominions) to cultivate our friendship, and to co-operate with us in opposing any invader, and above all, a Muhammadan plunderer. Scindhia, therefore, has been the object of my unremitting attention. If he should return to Hindustan, you will immediately apply yourself to the commencement of negotiation with him, for the purpose of framing a defensive treaty against the Shah."

It is evident then that the object of despatching Colonel Collins to Sindhia's Court was to induce Sindhia to return to Hindust an from the Deccan. But, as said before, Sindhia did not credit the rumour with respect to the Shah's invading India. He did not remove from Puna. It was necessary to adopt other means. Although the actual means which Colonel Collins had adopted to bring about the return of Sindhia into Hindustan, is nowhere put in black and white, it is not very difficult to guess their nature. It appears to us that Colonel Collins adopted the same means which the Governor-General recommended the Governor of Bombay to pursue in order to prevent Zemaun Shah from invading India. In his letter to the Hon. Jonathan Duncan, dated Fort William, 8th October, 1798, Lord Mornington wrote :

"It has been suggested to me, and I understand it was the opinion of Sir Charles Mallet, that a further diversion of the Shah's force might be created by our affording certain encouragement to the nations occupying the Delta and lower parts of the Indus, who have been stated to be much disaffected to the Government of the Shah; I wish you to give this point the fullest and most serious consideration; to state to me your ideas upon it; and in the meanwhile to take any immediate steps which shall appear proper and practicable to you."

It appears to us that Colonel Collins took steps similar to those mentioned above which the Governor-General recommended to the Governor of Bombay, for inducing Sindhia to return to Hindustan. He fomented disaffection and discontent among the troops and subjects of Sindhia. The probability of his doing so is heightened by the fact that Lord Mornington looked upon Sindhia as an enemy. Since the days of Macpherson, the officiating successor of Warren Hastings, every Governor-General had secretly tried to reduce the power of Sindhia. Lord Mornington, notwithstanding all that he did, firstly, by spreading the reported designs of Zemaun Shah and, secondly, by despatching Colonel Collins to Sindhia's court to create disaffection and discontent in Sindhia's territories, failed in inducing Sindhia to return to Hindustan. Mill writes :

"Notwithstanding the hopes, however, which had been fondly entertained of a defensive alliance with Sindhia, the authorities in India (*i.e.*, Lord Mornington) wrote to the authorities in England in the following terms :

"From the letter to the Resident with Doulat Rao Sindhia, dated the 26th of October, you will observe, that Sindhia's continuance at Poona, the dissensions and disaffection which prevail among his commanders, and the unsettled and precarious state of his authority in Hindusthan, have prevented our taking any further steps for carrying the intended arrangements into effect."*

The dissensions and disaffection among Sindhia's commanders, "and the unsettled

* VI., p. 130.

and precarious state of" Sindhia's "authority in Hindusthan," seem to have been, as stated before, brought about by the English, for these were discovered when it was found impossible to induce Sindhia to return to Hindusthan.

"It was in the beginning of October (1798)," continues Mr. Mill, "that the authorities in India delivered it to the authorities in England, as their opinion, that the greatest advantages would arise from a connexion with Scindhia. Before the end of the same month, they find the circumstances of Scindhia to be such, that no further steps for carrying the intended arrangements into effect are accounted advisable. Again, the inability of Scindhia from the disaffection of his commanders and the tottering state of his authority, were now made the foundation on which measures of policy were built."

Lord Mornington made a discovery that Sindhia was intriguing with Vazir Ali of Oudh. As we do not find any allusion to this intrigue in any official records we are justified in expressing our opinion that this alleged intrigue of Sindhia was a fabrication of Lord Mornington. Dating his letter from Fort St. George, March 3rd, 1790, and marking it "private," Lord Mornington wrote to Colonel Palmer :

"I employ private mode of communication for the purpose of informing you of a circumstance which has just now come to my knowledge.

An original letter from Ambajee, Scindhia's principal commander in Hindusthan, has been found among the papers of the Vizier Ali, which were taken at the attack of Madhoo Doss's garden, from which it appears that a treaty has been secretly concluded by Ambajee, on the part of Doulat Rao Scindhia, with Vizier Ali.

The treaty itself is not in possession of Government, but from Ambajee, and from the letters from Kamgar Khan, Namdar Khan, and other papers belonging to Vizier Ali, there can be no doubt that the principal objects of this treaty are of the most hostile nature to the Company, and they are proposed to be accomplished by placing Vizier Ali on the Musnud of Oude, by means of the assistance of Scindhia, and by the establishment of the union of interests between Scindhia and Vizier Ali.

You will be cautious not to disclose your knowledge of this circumstance to any person whatever, but you will endeavour, consistently with this caution, to obtain every information which may tend to throw light on the motives and objects of this flagrant act of treachery on the part of Doulat Rao Scindhia ; and you will keep a vigilant eye on all his proceedings, giving the earliest information of them to me."

While this alleged "flagrant act of treachery" on the part of Doulat Rao Sindhia has never been proved, this much is certain that the Governor-General's conduct towards the successor of Mahadji Sindhia savours of foul treachery. While to all outside appearances, the British professed great friendship and regard for Doulat Rao Sindhia, as evidenced from the fact that a Resident was sent to his Court, they nevertheless did not scruple to secretly adopt questionable means to bring about his ruin. If this was not treachery, the word has no significance.

On that very date, Lord Mornington wrote a private letter to Captain Kirkpatrick, the Resident of Hydarabad. In it he enclosed a copy of his letter to Colonel Palmer and wrote :

"I recommend the important intelligence which it contains to your most serious attention, relying on your discretion for an exact observance of the same secrecy which I have enjoined Colonel Palmer to observe. It does not appear to me to be advisable, in the present moment, to hazard, the disclosure of Scindhia's views, in their full extent, to Azim-Ul-Omra, but I think it would be

highly necessary in my name, to point that minister's particular attention to the probability of some attempt on the part of Doulat Rao Scindhia against the Nizam's territories, during the progress of our operation against Seringapatam."

This allegation of treachery served as a hint to the British Residents at Puna and Hydarabad to conspire and plot against Sindhia. What appeared to Lord Mornington to be "the probability of some attempt on the part of Doulat Rao Scindhia against the Nizam's territories," was made by Colonel Palmer to appear as almost a certainty. Almost immediately on receiving Lord Mornington's letter, from which extracts have been given above, the Resident at Puna discovered that Doulat Rao Sindhia had been concerting plans for attacking the Nizam. Dating his letter from Puna, April 8, 1799, Colonel Palmer wrote to Lord Mornington that,

"Rubah Ganwar, Vakeel at this Court, has informed Moonshee Fuckeer-Ud-Deen, with whom he had long been on terms of great friendship and confidence, that having enquired of Jadoo Bauschar the state of affairs at 'Scindhia's Durbar, Bauschar communicated to him a plan concerted by the Peishwa and Scindhia to attack the Nizam, and eventually to form an alliance with Tippoo Sultan."

It will be noticed that Colonel Palmer dragged in the name of the Peshwa also. Colonel Palmer did not take the trouble to find out if these allegations and rumours had any foundation in truth. In his letter from which an extract has been given above, the Resident states that he could not find out how far the alleged treachery on the part of the Peshwa and Sindhia was reliable. But nevertheless he mentioned these rumours to Lord Mornington, because he knew that in that way he would curry favor with the Governor-General.

The English did not rest satisfied with merely conspiring and plotting against Sindhia. In order to induce him to return to Hindustan Lord Mornington adopted coercive measures to intimidate him. He wrote on 3rd March, 1799, to Captain Kirkpatrick:

"You have been already apprised of the embassy which I have despatched to the Raja of Berar. The moment appears to approach when the advantage to be derived from the connection with the Court of Nagpur may become highly important in the scale of our political relations. It would be desirable to cement this connection through the means of the Court of Hyderabad ; and perhaps ultimately, to form a defensive alliance, of which Scindia as well as Tippoo should be the object........ Until the war with Mysore should be brought to conclusion, it will not be prudent to undertake any hostile operations against Scindia."

The man chosen for the purpose of acting the part of emissary at the Court of the Raja of Berar, was Mr. Colebrooke, afterwards well known as the great Sanskrit scholar. In a letter to him enclosed in the Governor-General's letter to Captain Kirkpatrick of the 3rd March, 1799, he was told :

"My verbal instruction to you on your departure from Fort William, proceeded no further than to direct you to endeavour to ascertain and report to me the character, disposition, views and interests of the Rajah of Berar; the nature and extent of his resources and military force, and the best means of availing ourselves of his alliance, in the event of hostilities, either with Zemaun Shah or Tippoo Sultan.

"The local position of the Rajah's territories appears to render him a peculiarly serviceable ally against Daulat Rao Scindhia,...... I therefore wish you to turn your attention immediately to the consideration of a treaty of defensive alliance, against the detected projects of Scindhia, between

the Rajah of Berar, the Nizam, and the Company, with power to the Peishwa to accede to it whenever he shall think fit.* .

* * *

"However evident the hostile designs of Scindhia may be, in the actual state of affairs it is not prudent to propose to the Rajah of Berar, or even to the Peishwa or to the Nizam, a treaty of defence nominally against Scindhia. Even the preliminary measures for ascertaining the disposition of the Rajah of Berar on this subject must be taken with the greatest caution. The object of our apprehension should appear to be Tippoo Sultan ; and although 'any other enemy of the contracting powers' may be named in general terms, no suggestion should yet be given by which the name of Scindhia could be brought into question.....

"A treaty might, therefore, be proposed to the Rajah, the immediate and ostensible object of which should be to strengthen and define his defensive engagements against Tippoo Sultan but the terms of which should be such as to admit the insertion of Scindhia's name, if such a measure should become necessary previously to the conclusion of the treaty."

At the same time Lord Mornington kept a large force facing the frontiers of Sindhia's dominions in Hindusthan. Dating his letter to Colonel Palmer from Fort St. George, 3rd March, 1799, he wrote :—

"The considerable force now under the command of Sir James Craig, will remain assembled on the frontier of Oude, and I should hope that the knowledge of that circumstance would prevent Scindhia or Amvajee from making any movements of a hostile tendency, to the interests of the Company."

All these measures made Sindhia believe that the British meant invading his territories. So he left Puna and returned to Hindustan. Although there is no evidence, yet it is quite possible that he harboured designs not quite favourable to the interests of the Company. It was in this way, that Lord Mornington succeeded in detaching the Peshwa from Sindia. It was the object of the Governor-General to keep the Marathas neutral, and he succeeded in this also. For the reason stated before, he does not seem to have been particularly anxious to have the Marathas to co-operate with him in his war with Tipu.

Lord Mornington's chief argument for forcing the Subsidiary Alliance on the Nizam and trying to do the same on the Peshwa was, that, in an event of war with Tipu, these two allies of the Christians would not be able to render any assistance to the Company. It has already been said that no occasion had arisen to test the correctness or otherwise of this opinion of the Governor-General. The Nizam, of course, had now entered into the Subsidiary Alliance. But the Peshwa had not as yet done so and he was in a position to afford assistance to the Company. Captain Grant Duff (p. 542) writes :

"The Marathas naturally viewed this treaty (of the Nizam) with much jealousy, and the Peishwa, on being urged by the British agent to conclude a similar one, evaded the subject by an assurance that he would faithfully execute the conditions of subsisting engagements, and, on the prospect of a war with Tippoo, promised to afford his aid. In these replies Bajee Rao had followed the opinion and advices of Nana Furnawees. . . . Nana Furnawees recommended that Appa Saheb, the son of Pureshram Bhow, should be appointed to command the contingent intended to co-operate with the English ; and in the present exigency proposed to assemble it, by collecting the force under Dhondoo Punt Gokla, Sur-Subedar of the Carnatic, the troops of Rastia Vinchorkur, and all the

* No project of Sindhia had been as yet detected.

horse which the Brahmin jaghirdars could raise. The necessities of the state, and the presence of Scindhia, precluded the Peishwa from recruiting his own army or detaching any part of it from Poona. Appa Sahib refused the command, but the offer having led to a reconciliation between Pureshram Bhow and Nana, the Bhow agreed to head the contingent himself. . . . . An English detachment, similar to that formerly employed and under the command of the same officer, was held in readiness to join Pureshram Bhow."

But all the preparations and the expenses incurred by the great Nana were in vain. The Governor-General would have nothing to do with the Maratha contingent. The reasons assigned by Captain Grant Duff (p. 543) for the Governor-General's refusal do not seem to us to be the real ones. He writes :

"After the English had commenced hostilities against Tippoo, his envoys were publicly received at Poona although repeated remonstrances were made on the subject by the British Resident. Even after their formal dismissal was intimated to Colonel Palmer, on the 19th March, they retired only to Kirwee, a village 25 miles South of Poona. Colonel Palmer at first supposed that the detention of the Wukeels was a mere repetition of the formal plan of obtaining a sum of money, on a false pretence of neutrality or aid. The British Resident knew that Bajee Rao had received 13 lakhs of Rupees from Tippoo, to which Scindia was privy, but it was not known at that time to Nana Furnawees ; and when the Governor-General noticed the conduct of the Court of Poona, by simply countermanding the detachment which had been prepared to accompany Pureshram Bhow, Nana Furnawees could not comprehend the reason."

The story of the Peshwa receiving 13 lakhs of rupees from Tipu, without the knowledge of the astute Nana Fadnavis, whose Intelligence Department was the most perfect in India, carries the stamp of improbability on its face. Regarding his Intelligence Department Bal Gangadhar Tilak, than whom there is no better authority on the life and times of Nana Fadnavis, writes :

"He was a past master in the art of getting speedy and reliable information from every part of the country. He commanded the means of knowing, while sitting in his room, everything of importance that was occurring from day to day at the different royal courts of India. The working of his Intelligence Department was so perfect that half a dozen or dozen accounts of every important occurrence in any part of the country reached him from different sources within a reasonable time ; so that sitting in his chamber, Nana could easily judge of the corroborative value of the different versions and arrive at a conclusion which was nearer truth than any single one of these accounts." *

So we are fully justified in looking upon the story of the 13 Lakhs as a pure fabrication of the Resident to prejudice the Governor-General against the Peshwa. Colonel Palmer did not succeed in forcing the scheme of Subsidiary Alliance on the Peshwa. He was, therefore, trying to widen the gulf between the Peshwa and the British Government. All sorts of stories based on idle rumours calculated to discredit the Peshwa were reported by him to the Governor-General. And at last he succeeded in inducing the Governor-General to decline to accept the offer of assistance by the Peshwa.

Grant Duff is mistaken in writing that the Governor-General countermanded the detachment which had been prepared to "accompany Pureshram Bhow" because of the rumoured intrigue of the Peshwa with Tipu. Lord Mornington had no idea of the intrigue till Colonel Palmer wrote to him about it in his letter dated

* The *Mahratta* for March 19th, 1900.

Puna, April 8, 1799. But this letter was written five days after the Governor-General had officially declined the Peshwa's offer. Dating his letter from Fort St. George, 3rd April, 1799, Lord Mornington wrote to Col. Palmer :

"The reasons which induced me to order the recall of the detachment must be obvious to the durbar of Poonah ; and, I imagine they had already been fully stated to you."

The letter is a long one, and his lordship, who never acted on the saying that "Brevity is the soul of wit," has introduced in it a great deal of irrelevant and unnecessary matters. In searching for the reasons of recall we nowhere find any allusion to the story of the 13 lakhs of the rupees, which it was alleged, the Peshwa had taken from Tipu, or the alleged intrigue of the Peshwa with the Muhammadan prince. After carefully analysing the whole letter, we hit upon two reasons which seemed to have induced the Governor-General to decline the Peshwa's offer. One of the reasons was the delay on the part of the Peshwa in furnishing the necessary funds for the detachment. To quote the Governor-General's own words :

"Every artifice of vexatious delay has been employed to frustrate the necessary means of enabling the detachment to move from Jyeghur ... The necessary funds for its subsistence have been neglected."

This does not appear to have been a reason of any importance to have induced the Governor-General to decline the offer. It does not even seem to be correct that the necessary funds were neglected. Had it been so, the Governor-General's order in countermanding the detachment would not have taken Nana by surprise, as stated by Captain Grant Duff.

The second reason assigned for countermanding the detachment appears to be "the detention of Sultan's Vakeels at Poonah, in contempt of my (Lord Mornington's) repeated remonstrances." This appears to us to be merely a pretext and not a valid reason for declining the offer. The Governor-General did not take into due consideration the arguments of Nana. He writes :

"The arguments of Nana, drawn from the last war with Mysore, are not applicable to the present case. The connection between the Courts of Poonah and the Company had not at that time been so defined and cemented as to render the admission of Vakeels from Tippoo Sultan incompatible with the spirit of the subsisting treaties."

It was convenient for Lord Mornington to ignore the customs and etiquette of the Courts of Asiatic Princes observed since time immemorial. But the Peshwa's Court went even to the length of dismissing Tipu's Vakils from Puna in order to oblige the Governor-General. Even this formal dismissal did not satisfy the Resident at Puna. He reported to the Governor-General that these Vakils "only retired to Kirwi, a village 25 miles south of Poona." Their formal dismissal and denial of official recognition to them should have been considered as evidence of the Peshwa's good faith in carrying out the wishes of the Governor-General. As private individuals, they had every right to remain in any part of the Peshwa's territories. Nana Fadnavis was now the Peshwa's minister. That he did not know of the detention of Vakils in the Peshwa's dominion, exonerates the Peshwa's Court from the accusation of 'a violation of faith.'

Colonel Palmer, in his letter of April 8th, 1799, writes to Lord Mornington that Nana "was uninformed of any reasons for the detention of Tipu's Vakils after they left Puna, except such as they assigned themselves, which were the want of carriage and dangers of the road." These were sufficient reasons to have carried weight with any unprejudiced mind.

It has been already said above that the real reasons which led the Governor-General to decline the Peshwa's offer of aid seems to have been the jealousy of the dangerous proportions which the power of the Marathas had assumed. It has also been said that after the Nizam had been forced to lose his independence and when the Governor-General made up his mind to go to war with Tipu he did not consider it necessary to press the Peshwa to render him any assistance. This is borne out by the Governor-General himself. In his letter to Colonel Palmer, dated Fort St. George, 3rd April, 1799, Lord Mornington wrote that

"the proposition for employing a detachment of the Company's troops with the Peishwa's contingent in the eventual prosecution of hostilities 'against Tippoo Sultan did not originate with me, but with the Peishwa himself."

Bearing this in mind, we should be very chary in believing that the Peshwa was at the same time intriguing with Tipu against the Company. We have already stated before that the Marathas did not consider the war with Tipu a just one, and therefore it is probable, that at first they did not approve of the aggressive measures which Lord Mornington was adopting towards the Mysore Ruler. The policy of self-defence must have even dictated them to attack the Nizam, who had not as yet fulfilled all the terms of the Treaty of Khardala, and to assist Tipu against the allied forces of the British and the Nizam. It might have been the policy of Doulat Rao Sindia. Of this however, as said before, there is no evidence. But when the Marathas saw that it was hopeless to attack the Nizam and go to the assistance of Tipu, the Peshwa under the guidance of Nana Fadnavis agreed to furnish a contingent to co-operate with the Company's troops against Tipu. At first Lord Mornington acceded to the proposal. But almost at the eleventh hour he declined the offer. Lord Mornington, according to his own showing, was never very solicitous of the Peshwa's aid. And now circumstances had so far occurred to his favor that he could afford to decline the proffered aid of the Peshwa. Doulat Rao Sindia had returned to Hindustan, which had the effect of keeping the Marathas neutral. Moreover, in all the arguments with Tipu, that prince had been worsted. So, after putting the Peshwa to all the unnecessery expense, Lord Mornington declined his offer of aid; and in so doing he wrote to Col. Palmer on 3rd April, 1799, from Fort St. George: "My confident expectation is, that the allies will speedily reduce the vindictive spirit of Tipu Sultan to submission without the aid of the Peshwa." Here at least Lord Mornington states the real reason which prompted him to decline the Peshwa's offer of aid.

But Seringapatam had not yet fallen; Tipu had not yet been slain or taken prisoner. It was possible for the Peshwa to do a great deal of mischief and annoy the Company and their allies. Hence it was a stroke of diplomacy and manifestation of the spirit of

perfidiousness to feed the mind of the Peshwa with false hopes. Lord Mornington wrote to Colonel Palmer that

"notwithstanding the perverse and forbidden policy of the Court of Poonah, I shall not fail to secure for the Peishwa an equal participation with the other allies in any cessions which may be enforced from Tippoo Sultan. *I authorize you to make this declaration, in the most unequivocal terms, to the Peishwa and to Nana.* If even this declaration shall fail to excite the Peishwa to employ every practicable effort to fulfil his defensive engagements with the Company, I trust it will, at least, serve to prove the disinterested attachment of the British Government to every branch of the triple alliance."

A few words in the above extracts have been put in italics to show that Lord Mornington did not attach any conditions 'to secure for the Peshwa an equal participation in the cessions enforced from Tippoo.' But with the Governor-General the most unequivocal terms bore other significance. It meant, in plain language, *'bad faith.'*

Seringapatam was after all captured and Tipu was also slain. This event happened on the 4th May, 1799. But before the news of the fall of Seringapatam could have reached the Peshwa, he had once more offered his assistance to the Company. His contingent under Pureshram Bhow was not yet broken up and he thought that perhaps it might with advantage co-operate with the British against Tipu. The Governor-General not only curtly refused that offer, but attributed improper and unjust motives to the Peshwa for so doing. Dating his letter from Fort St. George, 23th May, 1799, Lord Mornington wrote to the Resident at Puna:

"The Peishwa's sudden determination to take the field accompanied by the tacit acquiescence of Scindhia, and by the orders which you state to have been forwarded to Pureshram Bhow appears to me very suspicious. It is possible that before the 10th of May, the Peishwa might have been apprised of the fall of Seringapatam; and his own preparations together with the orders of Pureshram Bhow, may have been intended to favor the seige of Bednore, or of some other part of the late Tippoo Sultan's dominions, with the view of securing the dominions seized in defiance of the consent of the Company and of the Nizam."

In those days there were no telegraphs and no railways. It was therefore perfectly impossible for the Peshwa to have been apprised of the fall of Seringapatam 'before the 10th of May.' It was also equally impossible for Sindia to know of the fate of Seringapatam before that date. As to the motives which the Governor-General attributed to the Peshwa's 'preparations together with the orders to Pureshram Bhow,' it is only necessary to say that if the British did not go to war with Tipu from a superfluity of unselfishness, or for no end, they should not have expected the Marathas to render them assistance without receiving any reward. But the Governor-General did not stop with merely questioning the motives of the Peshwa, but for the first time in his official correspondence, he charged the Peshwa with 'treachery.' He wrote to Colonel Palmer:

"I desire that you will take the most effectual measures in your power to discover the intention of the Peishwa with respect to the treacherous designs which I apprehended him to have formed; and that you will employ such representations or other means as may appear to you most likely to prevent the execution of this design, if really entertained."

This was, of course, the diplomatic way of ordering the Resident to fabricate, if necessary, evidence to incriminate the Peshwa. And the Resident gladdened

the heart of Lord Mornington by doing so. As a pretext for not fulfilling the promise made to the Peshwa, the British invented 'the treacherous design' of that Hindu sovereign. If there was 'treacherous design' on any one's part, it was that of the Company's servants themselves. This imputation of 'treacherous design' to the Peshwa reminds one of Schopenheur's saying that "it is generally the old story of the dog barking at its own image, it is himself that he sees and not another as he fancies."

As said before, the promised cession of a portion of the conquered territory to the Peshwa was quite unconditional. But the promise, it appears, was made to keep the Marathas quiet and neutral. When this object had been gained and when Tipu had been slain and Seringapatam had fallen, the Governor-General wrote to the Resident at Puna, on the 23rd May, 1799, that

"previously to the cession of any portion of territory to the Peishwa, I should wish to endeavour to accomplish the whole of the arrangement contained in my instructions to you of the 8th July, 1798. And I desire to learn from you, without delay, whether a renewal of those propositions under the present circumstances of affairs would prove acceptable to the Court of Poonah."

Nana Fadnavis knew the perfidious character of the European of his day. Twenty years had not yet rolled their course since Nana Fadnavis had reasons to be disgusted with the conduct of the Europeans for their remarkable capacity for chicanery and perfidy and their utter contempt for justice and fairplay. He was a Hindu of the old type and was nurtured on the traditions of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Twenty years served to strengthen his conviction that the 'ways of the Europeans were unfair and wily.' But he was not quite prepared to believe that the Governor-General would unblushingly violate his most solemn promise and withhold the cession of the conquered territory.

The principal reason assigned by Lord Mornington on his arrival in India for trying to enforce the scheme of Subsidiary Alliance on the Peshwa, was based on his presumption that in the event of a war with Tipu, the Peshwa would not be able to filfil the conditions required of him as those of an ally. But that his presumption was totally groundless was proved by the fact that the Peshwa offered a contingent to co-operate with the Company's troops against Tipu. The Governor-General's calculation being falsified by the recent events, he evaded the non-fulfilment of his unconditional promise by starting other objections.

Twenty years before, Nana Fadnavis had asked all the independent princes of India to combine against the Europeans. Even the Mughal Emperor was approached to lend countenance to his scheme of a general alliance of all the independent powers of India against the wily and perfidious Europeans. He had succeeded so far that the then Governor-General of India was obliged to sue for peace on the terms dictated to him by Nana. But those twenty years had made a great difference in the history of India. The Nizam was now virtually a prisoner of the Europeans. The principality raised by Hydar was now in the hands of the Europeans who were on the frontiers of the Marathas. But the great Nana did not still despair. He thought that the Marathas alone were capable of coping with the Europeans and their new allies. Of course, he did not cease pressing the Governor-General to fulfil his promise regarding the

cession of a portion of the conquered territory to the Peshwa. He would not agree to the conditions which the Governor-General now tried to impose on the Peshwa, previous to ceding him any portion of the late Tipu's dominions. But when he saw that the faithless Governor-General did not mean to fulfil his promise, he tried to unite the Maratha confederates and with their help attack Nizam Ali and the English. The nucleus of an army for these operations, he possessed in the force under Pureshram Bhow, previously intended to co-operate with the allies against Tipu.

But unfortunately he did not succeed in his attempt. There were not only distractions in his dominions, to which reference will be presently made, but there was formidable disturbance in the southern Maratha country The Jagirdars of that part of the Maratha Empire had rebelled against the authority of the Peshwa. It is a noteworthy fact that these Jagirdars of the southern Maratha country should have raised the standard of rebellion soon after the English had taken possession of Tipu's dominions. Does not this very fact suggest that their disaffection and discontent were probably encouraged by the Europeans, who also in all probability instigated them to rebel against the Peshwa ?

When Lord Mornington declared hostilities against Tipu, he appointed a commission for the purpose of encouraging "the tributaries, principal officers, and other subjects of Tipu Sultan to throw off the authority of that prince." After the fall of Seringapatam and death of Tipu, three out of the five members of the commission were still in Mysore. These. three were Lord Mornington's brother Col. Arthur Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington), Col. Barry Close and Captain (afterwards Sir John) Malcolm. They were members of another commission appointed for the settlement of the Mysore territory. Arthur Wellesley was made the Governor of Mysore. It is only necessary to make a passing allusion to the appointment of Col. Wellesley. No fair-minded writer has ever justified this appointment. It was a jobbery of the worst type perpetrated by the Governor-General. Sir David Baird had superior claims to the appointment. In the *Calcutta Review* for July, 1857, Revd. Dr. Thomas Smith refers to the slight supposed to have been cast upon Sir David Baird by his exclusion from the Commission, and by the appointment of Col. Wellesley to the command of the city, to which Baird was thought to have a superior claim. He writes :

"We have no wish to revive this controversy ; but we do think it is scarcely fair to admit, as seems to be sometimes admitted as an element in the discussion, the 'subsequent career of Colonel Wellesley. It is forgotten that the controversy took place in the eighteenth, not in the nineteenth century : that the parties were not Sir David Baird and Colonel the Honourable Sir Arthur Wellesley . . . . . . We have not been quite convinced, either that Wellesley had showed so pre-eminent qualifications, or Baird so striking disqualifications as to justify the Governor-General passing over the fine old hero, appointing his own brother."

But it is not remembered by these writers that the business of the Commission mainly consisted in corrupting, bribing and coercing the adherents of Tipu into submission. Sir David Baird was a gallant soldier ; a straightforward, though probably a blunt and brusque man. He could not have approved of or carried out the crooked policy of the Governor-General. What wonder if the commissioners appointed for the settlement

of the Mysore territory, extended their field of work into the dominions of the Peshwa bordering on Mysore? The very fact of the rising of the southern Jagirdars while the Mysore Commission were in the midst of their labour would, as said before, point to the members of that commission probably having had a hand in encouraging these disturbances.

Nana Fadnavis was therefore required, first of all, to set his own house, as it were, in order. The force under Pureshram Bhow was despatched to the southern Maratha country to suppress the disturbances. But order and tranquility had not yet been restored in the territories of the Jagirdars of the South, when death overtook Nana Fadnavis. This sad event took place on 13th February, 1800. His death was an irreparable loss to the Marathas. With him passed away the dream of the Marathas to regain their lost supremacy in Indian politics. He was the only man in India to see through the designs of the crafty and faithless Europeans of his times. His death, therefore, was welcome to them.

But they did not yet breathe very freely. Doulat Rao Sindhia was still alive and was known to be a very ambitious prince. Without curbing or reducing him, there was to be no peace for them. Ever since his arrival in India Lord Mornington had paid as much attention to reduce the power of Sindia as that of Tipu. He did not conceal this. He entered into a campaign of intrigues and conspiracies against Sindia. He sent a Resident to Sindia's Court and despatched another to Nagpur to stir up the Raja of Berar against Sindhia. At first it was given out by the Governor-General that all his efforts were directed against Sindhia in order to induce him to return to Hindustan. When this was accomplished, that is, when Sindia had left the Deccan for Hindustan, Lord Mornington entered into a fresh course of intrigues against that prince and invented the pretext for so doing by stating that that prince had hostile intentions against the Company and their allies. The despatches of Lord Mornington convince us that he had intended to go to war with Sindhia a long time before he declared hostilities against Tipu Sultan. He himself went to Madras to be near the scene of operations against Tipu, leaving at Calcutta Sir Alured Clarke, the Commander-in-Chief, as provisional Governor of Bengal. It was given out that the stay in Calcutta of the Commander-in-Chief was necessary, as Zemaun Shah had threatened an invasion of India. But it was a mere pretext to cover the real design of the Governor-General to attack Sindhia. All his letters and despatches from Madras prove this. In his private letter, dated Fort St. George, March 3rd, 1799, to Captain Kirkpatrick of Hydarabad, Lord Mornington informed him of the embassy which he had despatched to the Raja of Berar. This embassy was sent "to form a defensive alliance, of which *Scindhia as well as Tippoo should be the object.*" The words in italics show his meaning very clearly. Again, dating from Fort St. George, 8th March, 1799, in his "private and secret" letter to Sir Alured Clarke, he wrote:

"In every private letter which I have written to you...... I have uniformly desired that a respectable force should be maintained on that frontier, with a view to check the possible designs of Dowlat Rao Scindhiah.

* * * * *

"My wish is, that you should, without delay, reassemble in Oude such a force as you may deem adequate to the object in checking . . . the whole of Scindhiah's force if that chief should return into Hindustan. You will also keep in view the probability of early offensive operations against the dominions of Scindhiah."

The Governor-General advised the Commander-in-Chief to tell horrid lies to Sindhia, for he wrote :

"The reassembling of the army may possibly alarm Ambajee and Scindhiah, and an explanation may be demanded of the motives of such a step. You will ascribe it to the escape of Vizier Ali from Benares, to the probability of his attempting to join Zemaun Shah, and to the consequences which that event might produce."

There are reasons to suspect that the distractions which had taken place in the dominions of Sindhia, even in the time of Mahadji, and the feuds between Holkar and Sindhia, were brought about by the exertions of the successive Governor-Generals from the time of Sir John Macpherson. No previous Governor-General was so rash as to put this in black and white. But we must give credit to Lord Mornington for being an honest scoundrel. He wrote to Sir Alured Clarke :

"If hostilities should commence ...... you will use every endeavour to excite the Rajpoots and other tributaries against Scindhiah, and to induce the Rajahs of Jynagur and Jodhpur to enter zealously into the war ; you will at the same time take proper steps for supporting and encouraging the exertions of the partizans of the Byes and Lukwaji Dada, together with all persons in the family or service of Scindhiah, who may be disaffected to his Government."

Here, after all, the cat is out of the bag or, rather, the murder is out. All the distractions and disorders which prevailed in the dominions of Sindhia were most probably the doings of the Company's servants. It is probable that they instigated Jasvantrao Holkar to attack Sindhia. Lord Mornington further wrote to Sir Alured Clarke :

"I am equally satisfied of the policy of reducing the power of Scindhia, whenever the opportunity shall appear advantageous. But while Scindhia shall remain in the Deccan, and while our armies shall be engaged in war with Tippoo Sultan, Scindhia will possess considerable means of embarrassing us in that quarter ; for this reason it is extremely desirable to avoid hostilities with him until either his return to Hindustan, or a peace with Tippoo Sultan shall place our affairs in a condition, which may enable us to punish the treachery of Scindhia, with more effect."

But before we describe the measures adopted by the Governor-General to reduce the power of Sindhia, it is necessary to advert to the occurrences at Puna after the death of Nana Fadnavis.

Baji Rao neither possessed administrative capacity for civil government, nor pluck and courage for military affairs, by virtue of which the earlier Peshwas had succeeded in extending the Maratha power in all directions of India. He was not even a statesman like Nana Fadnavis. Lacking in all the qualities which ought to be possessed by a man in the important situation of the Peshwa, after the death of Nana, he eagerly listened to the advice of the interested intriguers and conspirators. He did not repose confidence in any one. Always distrustful of every one about him, he proved to be a fitful tool in the hands of the Europeans for the destruction of the independence of the Marathas.

The Nizam, Tipu and the Nawab of Surat used to pay *chauth* to the Marathas. When the Nizam concluded the treaty of Subsidiary Alliance with the Company, Tipu was slain by troops led by European officers, and the Nawab of Surat pensioned off, the Marathas asked for their *chauths* from the Europeans, as they had to settle all foreign affairs on behalf of the Nizam, of the successor of Tipu and the Nawab of Surat. The question of *chauth* formed a strong point in all discussions which Nana Fadnavis carried on with the Governor-General. But Nana died and the Europeans refused to settle this matter on behalf of their allies. Then again, after the death of Nana Fadnavis, Surat was annexed, as stated in the last chapter, in May, 1800. The Nawab was a tributary of the Peshwa. The latter demanded the usual *chauth* of Surat from the East India Company. The Governor-General found means, to be narrated presently, to incite Holkar to attack Sindhia, who was espousing the cause of the Peshwa.

As has been stated before, Baji Rao owed his elevation to the Peshwa's *masnad* to the help accorded to him by Dowlat Rao Sindhia. The latter, therefore, naturally expected that in all important state affairs, Baji Rao would consult him. A feeling of gratitude should have dictated Baji Rao to do so. But like Frankenstein of the fable, Dowlat Rao Sindhia had brought into existence a creature who ultimately brought about his ruin. It is probable that the Europeans seized every opportunity to poison the mind of Baji Rao against Sindhia. With his characteristic short-sightedness, he was intriguing with the Europeans to throw off what he supposed to be the galling yoke, and become independent, of Sindhia. In all these intrigues he was encouraged by the Europeans. Dowlat Rao Sindhia at first did not pay any attention to these intrigues.

But he had every reason to be indignant when, without his knowledge, the Peshwa granted the permission to the British Government of sending troops into the Maratha territory for the pursuit of Dhundhia Waugh.* After the fall of Seringapatam, Dhundhia, who had been the prisoner of Tipu, made his escape from Seringapatam, and succeeded in gaining around him many adherents. With these men, he carried on guerilla warfare in the dominions of the late Tipu. It was necessary that the Company should do something to protect the lives and properties of their new subjects. A large force under Colonel (but now Major-General) the Honorable Sir Arthur Wellesley was sent to pursue Dhundhia, who escaped into the territories of the Marathas. The British Government made application to the Peshwa, and obtained permission to pursue and destroy Dhundhia. It was the grant of this permission which justly exasperated Sindhia. Dowlat Rao possessed a sound knowledge of military tactics, which Baji Rao sadly lacked. Besides, it appears that as a statesman he was far superior to his uncle, Mahadji. The Peshwa committed a suicidal mistake by permitting the British to send troops into the Maratha territory. These troops were under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley. He entered the Maratha territory, and pursued and slew Dhundhia Waugh. He did much

* He was a Maratha, converted to Muhammadanism by Tipu. See Colonel Mile's *History of Tipu* (Panini office reprint), p. 176.

more. He espied out the strategical positions and weaknesses of the dominions of the Marathas. This knowledge stood him in good stead in all his wars with the Marathas, and his subsequent successful career is mainly to be attributed to his gaining the knowledge of the country of the Marathas. After his return, he wrote a "Memorandum upon the operations of the Maratha territory." The opening words of the Memorandum were ominous, for these do not show the gratitude of the British for the favour they had received at the hands of the Marathas. This Memorandum begins :

"As before long we may look to war with the Marathas, it is proper to consider the means of carrying it on. The experience which has been acquired in the late contest with Dhoondhia Waugh, of the seasons, the nature of the country, its roads, its produce, and its means of defence, will be of use in pointing them out. I shall detail my observations upon each of these points for the benefit of those in whose hands may be placed the conduct of the operations of the army in case of such a war, as I have supposed we may expect."

Then he goes on to detail his observations, which it is not necessary to refer to in this place.

As said before, Sindhia was much dissatisfied with the conduct of Baji Rao. He was afraid lest Baji Rao should commit other blunders by courting the friendship of the British. Grant Duff writes :

"Fearing that Bajee Rao intended to fly, he (Dowlat Rao Scindhia) for some time kept a guard over his palace. The Peishwa found that his condition was by no means improved by the death of Nana Furnawees, and from the situation in which he was so long placed we cannot be surprised that his natural disposition to intrigue should have become incurably habitual."*

The Marathas had, a quarter of a century before, been plunged into the war with the English, by the flight of Raghoba. Therefore Dowlat Rao was fully justified in keeping a guard over the Peshwa's palace. But, unfortunately, Sindhia did not go far enough. He adopted half measures. He should not have scrupled in dethroning and imprisoning, or if need be, executing, the Peshwa. This would have perhaps saved the Marathas from losing their independence. But like Frankenstein of the fable he spared the Peshwa, who brought all the miseries and foreign rule upon Maharastra.

Baji Rao was intriguing with the British. But Sindhia's influence at Puna prevented the Peshwa's intrigue bearing any fruit. The Resident at Puna, Col. Palmer, it seems, was not so clever as Captain Kirkpatrick of Hydarabad. From his stay in Puna, he was unable to gain any advantages for the British. So Colonel the Honorable Arthur Wellesley wrote to Major Munro (afterwards Sir Thomas Munro) on 20th August, 1800 :

"Scindhia's influence at Poona is too great for us ; and I see plainly, that if Colonel Palmer remains there we shall not be able to curb him without going to war. There was never such an opportunity for it as the present moment ; and probably by bringing forward, and establishing in their ancient possessions, the Bhow's family under our protection, we should counter-balance Sindia."†

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* P. 551

† It is probable that Baji Rao, when he granted the permission to the British Government of sending troops into the Maratha territory, contemplated an alliance with the English, and also flight from Puna, to become independent of Sindhia. In these views, he was probably encouraged by the British Resident. Captain Grant Duff (p. 552) writes :

Every one seems to have been dissatisfied with Colonel Palmer, because he could not force the scheme of Subsidiary Alliances on the Peshwa. It was, therefore, considered necessary to replace him. The Marquess Wellesley's choice naturally fell on Colonel Kirkpatrick. That officer made the acquaintance of the Governor-General at the Cape. He was the real author of the scheme of Subsidiary Alliance. It was his brother Captain Kirkpatrick who succeeded in carrying it out in a masterly manner in the Nizam's dominions. What the younger brother did so very admirably, the elder was bound to do more excellently. But Colonel Kirkpatrick's ill-health obliged him to leave India for England. The next choice of the Marquess Wellesley fell on Colonel Close. It is probable that Colonel the Honorable Arthur Wellesley had a hand in the appointment of Colonel Close to the office of the Resident at Puna. Colonel Close was the right hand man of Arthur

"He (Bajee Rao) was, however, conscious of his own unpopularity as a son of Raghoba. He was anxious to keep well with the British Government, and really had a partiality for the English."

The force under Colonel Wellesley, sent into Maratha territory to pursue Dhundhia, would seem to have been designed for marching on to Puna, in the same manner as the force from Madras was sent to Hydarabad to overawe and disband Raymond's corps. This is borne out by the Marquis Wellesley's letter to the Right Honorable Lord Clive, dated Fort William, August 23rd, 1800, in which he wrote :

"My latest advices from Colonel Palmer indicate an approaching crisis of a nature which may demand our speedy and active interference in support of the just authority of the Peishwa. It is probable that I may receive an early and urgent application for that purpose from the Peishwa himself. In such an event, it may become necessary for a large proportion of the troops under the command of Colonel Wellesley to proceed (in concert with those of the Nizam, and with a detatchment from Bombay) towards Poona. The intermediate motions of Colonel Wellesley must be guided with a view to this probable contingency.

"The necessity of guarding against the revival of Dhoodhia's rebellion, and against the possibility of other commotions on the frontier, render it advisable that Colonel Wellesley should continue to occupy the Maratha territory, and to hold several posts from which he has expelled Dhoondhia's forces until all reasonable apprehensions of further disturbances shall have been removed. In either of two possible events, it would be wise and just to proceed still further :—first, the flight of Bajee Rao from Poona; second, the seizure of His Highness's person by Doulat Rao Scindhia. In either of these cases Colonel Wellesley's secure establishment, within the Maratha frontier, would facilitate his advance towards Poona. . . .

"I, therefore, request your Lordship to inform Colonel Wellesley, without delay, that on his receiving authentic and unquestionable intelligence either of the flight or imprisonment of Baji Rao (unless some obstacle should exist from the position of Dhoondhia or some other force) the British army is directed and authorized to take immediate possession, in the name, and on the behalf, of the Peishwa of all the country as far as the bank of the Kistna. Colonel Wellesley will also summon, in the name of the Peishwa, such forts and strong places within the limits described as it shall be judged expedient for the British troops to occupy. . . . .

"If Colonel Wellesley should engage in the operations described and authorized in the foregoing paragraph, he will take care to satisfy the inhabitants of the country that the British Government entertained no other view in them than the restoration of the Peishwa's lawful authority.".

But both the Marquess Wellesley and his brother Colonel Wellesley were disappointed. In their opinion it was Colonel Palmer who was to blame for not bringing about such a state of affairs in Puna as would have necessitated the march of British troops on the capital of the Peshwa's dominions.

Wellesley in the settlement of the Mysore territory, as he was on that commission appointed by the Governor-General for that purpose, and subsequently he acted in the capacity of Resident at Seringapatam. Arthur Wellesley naturally reposed every confidence in Col. Barry Close to take advantage of the "opportunity' to "curb' Sindhia. It was thus that Col. Barry Close succeeded Colonel Palmer at Puna.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that Colonel Palmer had not tried his best to bring the Peshwa under the scheme of Subsidiary Alliance. He had carried on the intrigue with the Peshwa to such a length that there was every prospect of success had he remained a few months longer at Puna. Mill writes:

"A few days before the arrival of Colonel Close, the Peishwa had communicated to Colonel Palmer, his predecessor, his consent to subsidize a permanent force of the Company's infantry, to the extent of six battalions, with the corresponding artillery, as the Governor-General had proposed; and to assign territory in Hindustan, producing twenty-five lacks of rupees annual revenue: but that the troops shall be retained within the Company's dominions at all times, except when the Peshwa should require their actual services. There was still a great distance between the compliance of the Peshwa, and the Governor-General's demands. 'I am to have my last private audience,' says Colonel Palmer, 'this evening, when I will make a final effort to convince his Highness of the lasting security, power, and prosperity,' (such was the language which the Governor-General and his agents held even to one another to their scheme for reducing to dependence the Princes of Hindustan) 'which he will derive from embracing your Lordship's proposals; though I apprehend, that nothing short of imminent and certain destruction will induce him to make cessions, which militate with his deep-rooted jealousy and prejudices' (so the aversion to a final renunciation of all independent power was cooly denominated); 'of which he thinks', continues the despatch, 'that he had already made extraordinary sacrifices'."*

The Governor-General had meditated attacking Sindhia when he went to Madras to fight Tipu. But as yet he did not think that the time had arrived to attack Sindhia. So he opened negotiations with him and tried to force on him the scheme of Subsidiary Alliance. On a previous page it has been said that Colonel Collins had been sent as Resident to Sindhia. But in December 1801, he was directed to repair to the camp of Dowlat Rao Sindhia, for the declared pupose of robbing that prince of his independence.

According to Lord Mornington, a defensive alliance with any one of the Maratha princes would produce one of two effects. Mill writes:

"Either it would compel them to give up their military power, in imitation of the state which had submitted to that stipulation; or it would place them 'in a dependent and subordinate condidition, a condition in which 'all their ambitious views, and aggressive designs, would be controlled. "It may reasonably,' says the Governor-General, 'be expected, that the success of a negotiation, for that purpose, with Dowlat Rao Scindhia, will materially promote the complete accomplishment of His Excellency's views, by inducing the other Maratha powers to concur in the proposed arrangement with a view to avoid *the dependent and subordinate condition to which they must be reduced,* by their exclusion from an alliance, *of which the operation with respect to them, must be, to control all ambitious views and aggressive designs on their part,* without affording to those powers the benefits of the general guarantee!" The doctrine of the Governor-General, therefore, was, that in this manner, every one of the Maratha States would become dependent upon the English Government; those who did not accept it, by being deprived of it; the same happy effect, in two opposite cases, by the same ingenious combination of means."†

* VI, p. 275. † *Ibid.*, pp. 270, 271.

But Sindhia was not going to fall in with the views of the scheming Governor-General. Colonel Collins was disappointed.

Of his failure, the Resident wrote to the Governor-General that

"Sindhia was anxiously desirous to preserve the relations of friendship at that time subsisting between him and the English Government. At the same time, I consider it my indispensable duty to apprise your excellency that I am firmly persuaded he feels no inclination whatever to improve those relations."

Referring to this language of Colonel Collins, Mill writes:

"In other words, he (Scindhia) was not yet brought so low, as willingly to descend into that situation in which a participation in the 'system of defensive alliance and mutual guarantee' would of necessity place him."*

Colonel Collins strongly recommended to the Governor-General to induce the Peshwa to enter into this system of alliance. He wrote:

"Were the Peishwa to accept the aid of a subsidiary force from our government, I shall, in this event, entertain strong hopes, that Sindhia, apprehensive lest the authority of the head of the Maratha Empire might be exerted against himself, would solicit as a favour to be admitted to the benefit of the treaty of general defensive alliance."†

The motive of Sindhia's not accepting the Governor-General's propositions was rightly stated by him. He wrote:

"It must likewise be considered, that, however much it may be to the interest of the Peishwa to engage in the defensive alliance, with a view to the restoration of the due exercise of his authority, as head of the Maratha Empire; yet that Sindhia is by no means in a similar predicament. On the contrary, as the Maharaja (Scindhia), by the real superiority of his power, is now enabled to intimidate Bajee Rao into concessions suitable to his purposes, he is apparently urged, by principles of self-interest, not only to decline becoming a party himself in the treaty, but moreover to exert his utmost influence, in order to prevent the Peishwa from entering into engagements which, if carried to the extent originally proposed, would completely render him alike independent of Sindhia, and of every other chieftain of the Maratha State."§

So it was decided that the Peshwa should be the victim. Colonel Barry Close was trying his best to effect this. The Peshwa, in common with all the other native rulers of India, knew that the Europeans were prostituting their military strength. It used to be the practice with the princes of India to hire the European soldiers to fight their battles. The Europeans were mercenaries of the worst type, and they rose to power because they were mercenaries. The Peshwa wanted to treat them as mercenaries, but the Marquess Wellesley, perhaps judging from his own domestic experience, thought that no other process in bringing under control an Indian prince could be followed than that of placing him at the mercy of mercenaries.

The ruin of the Indian princes would not be very far off, they being obliged to keep, instead of their own army, mercenary British officers and men who had prostituted their military skill and strength. It is idle to expect mercenaries to be faithful soldiers. The

* *Ibid.*, p. 272.

† *Ibid.*, p. 273.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 273 *f. n.*

Peshwa wanted to keep the European officers and men outside his dominions, because he knew of their intriguing and faithless character. The Marquess Wellesley, it appears, was willing to agree to this. N. B. Edmonstone, Secretary to Government, wrote a secret letter on 23rd June, 1802, to Colonel Close, Resident at Puna. In this occur the following significant passages :

"The measure of subsidizing a British force, even under the limitations which the Peishwa has annexed to that proposal, must immediately place him in some degree in a state of dependence upon the British power, ...*The dependence of a state of any degree upon the power of another naturally tends to increase.* A sense of security derived from the support of a foreign power, produces a relaxation of vigilance and caution. Augmenting the dependence of the Peishwa on the British power under the operation of the proposed engagements, would be accelerated by the effect which those engagements would produce of detaching the state of Poonah from the other members of the Maratha Empire."

He rightly argued that

"the conclusion of such engagements with the Peishwa would preclude the practicability of general confederacy among the Maratha States,......This separate counection with one of the branches of the Maratha Empire would not only contribute to our security, but would tend to produce a crisis of affairs which may compel the remaining states of the empire to accede to the alliance."

It was to reduce the Marathas to the position of dependence on the British that the Marquess Wellesley withdrew his resignation tendered to the Directors of the East India Company of his office as Governor-General of India, and stayed in this country. He knew that the seed which he had sown of his machinations was soon to bear fruit and so he changed his mind as to his returning to his country, It would have been fortunate for the Marathas, had he never set his foot on Indian soil or not changed his mind regarding his resignation of the Governor-Generalship of India. But on the 24th December, 1802, he wrote to the Honourable Court of Directors :

"I received with great satisfaction the notification of your appointment of Mr. Barlow to take charge of this government in the event of my death, resignation, or departure from India and I shall accordingly have considered myself to be authorized to embark for England in the approaching month of January, if an important crisis had not arisen in the state of political affairs in India since 13th of March, 1802.

"The recent distractions in the Maratha empire have occasioned a combination of the utmost importance to the stability of the British power. In my judgment, the confusion now prevailing among the Maratha powers, cannot terminate in any event unfavourable to the security of the Honorable Company or of its allies. But I cannot behold, without considerable solicitude, a conjuncture of affairs which appears to present the utmost advantageous opportunity that has ever occurred, of improving the British interests in that quarter on solid and durable foundations."

Of course, the Marquess Wellesley does not say anything about the authors of the distractions in the Maratha empire, but if we bear in mind certain facts or circumstances it will not be a great strain on the intellect to understand that the English were pulling the strings which wrought the distractions and confusion among the Marathas. In a half-hearted manner, the Peshwa was seeking the alliance of the British. He fully knew what dependence on them meant. His close association with Nana Fadnavis for a large number of years had taught him exactly what Mr. Edmonstone wrote to Col. Barry Close that "the dependence of a state in any degree upon the power of another

naturally tends to increase." He had also before his eyes the object lesson of the treatment meted out to the Nizam by his European friends and allies. The Nizam, as the price for his alliance with the latter, was obliged to grant them in 1798 a portion of his dominions. But the treaty of 1798 was annulled and in 1800 a new one was substituted, by which he was again obliged to part with a very large portion of his territories. In both the wars against Tipu, *viz.*, those of 1792 and 1799, the Nizam had assisted the British with men and money. He was allowed to participate in the conquered territories. But for his alliance with the Europeans the Nizam was deprived by them of all his acquired territories, and the boundaries of his dominions in 1800 were not even those he had in 1790 A. C. Besides, he was deprived of his independence and was virtually a prisoner in the hands of the Company. Seeing the fate of the Nizam, it is not surprising to understand the half-hearted manner in which the Peshwa was courting the friendship of the British.

In his last official despatch to the Governor-General, Colonel Palmer, the Resident at Puna, wrote :

"I apprehend, that nothing short of imminent and certain destruction will induce him (the Peishwa) to make concessions, which militate with his deep-rooted jealousy and prejudices."

That is to say, the Peshwa was not willing to permit the pythonic embrace of the Europeans unless as a last resource he was compelled to choose between the devil and the deep sea.

It was necessary, therefore, that something should be done to make the Peshwa apprehend his "imminent and certain destruction." To understand how this was done, one has to advert to the fugitive Holkar brothers.

Sindhia had defeated the Holkars, of whom Jashwant Rao fled to Nagpur and the younger, Withoji, was a fugitive at Kolhapore. There was already a British Resident at Nagpur, in the person of Mr. Colebrooke, sent by Lord Mornington to negotiate with the Raja of Berar for the purpose of forming an alliance against Sindhia. It is on record that the embassy of Mr. Colebrooke was a success, inasmuch as the Raja was willing to do anything to oblige the English. At a time when the Governor-General was devising every scheme calculated to reduce the power of Dowlat Rao Sindhia, when he was advising his Commander-in-Chief "to use every endeavour to excite the Rajputs and other tributaries against Sindhia" and to "take proper steps for supporting and encouraging the exertions of the partizans of the Byes and Lukwaji Dada together with all persons in the family or service of Sindhia, who may be disaffected to his Government," it will be folly and stupidity not to believe that the Governor-General's agent at Nagpur was trying to take advantage of and encourage the defeated enemy of Sindhia who had sought an asylum in the dominions of the Raja of Berar. The avowed object of the mission of Mr. Colebrooke to Nagpur was to excite the Raja of Berar against Sindhia, for wrote Lord Mornington to him that "the local positions of the Raja's territories appear to render him a peculiarly serviceable ally against Dowlut Rao Sindhia."

When Mr. Colebrooke found Jashwant Rao Holkar as a fugitive at Nagpur, he employed every means he could think of to help Holkar against Sindhia. Holkar made

his escape from Nagpur and raised an army and levied contributions on Sindhia's subjects.

Sindhia was at that time in the Deccan. But Jashwant Rao Holkar's progress and raids into his dominions obliged him to leave the Deccan and proceed to Malwa. The widows of the late Mahadji Sindhia were still in rebellion against Dowlat Rao, for they were encouraged and supported in this by the English. Sindhia tried to come to terms with Jashwant Rao. The latter seemed willing to agree to this. He agreed even

"to seize the Byes, to whom he had before proferred friendship. He accordingly attacked their troops, forced the ladies into Burhanpore, where he besieged them, but they were so fortunate as to escape towards Meywar,. . . . . . Sindhia supposed that, in permitting them to get off, Holkar had acted with double treachery."*

Sindhia's supposition was a fact. Unfortunately, he did not know Jashwant Rao Holkar was merely a tool in the hands of the Europeans. The Holkar was no statesman. He, therefore, carried on the policy which helped the Europeans. Holkar's 'proferred friendship' to the Byes, and his subsequently letting them escape towards Meywar, were in all probability dictated to him by the Europeans. We should not forget the instructions of the Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief, to "use every endeavour to excite the Rajpoots and other tributaries against Sindhia" and also to "take proper steps for supporting and encouraging the extertions of the partizans of the Byes." The Holkar played into the hands of the Governor-General.

It is not necessary to refer to all the battles fought between Sindhia and Holkar in Malwa. Fortune sometimes favored the one, and sometimes the other. During the absence of Sindhia, from the Deccan, Puna was the scene of distractions and disorders. Withoji Holkar, who had taken shelter in Kolhapur, raised the standard of revolt against the Peshwa, but he was captured and cruelly executed. Jashwant Rao Holkar, when apprised of the cruel execution of his brother, pledged the vow of vengeance against the Peshwa. Accordingly he turned his steps towards Puna. That he received assistance from the English the despatches of Lord Wellesley leave no room to doubt. In his despatch to the secret committee of the Honourable Court of Directors, dated Fort William, December 24, 1802, Lord Wellesley wrote:

"The increased distractions in the Maratha state, the rebellion of Yeshwant Rao Holkar. . . . against the combined forces of the Peishwa and Sindhia, appeared to constitute a crisis of affairs favourable to the success of our negotiations at Poona."

Again,

"This crisis of affairs appeared to me to afford the most favourable opportunity for the complete establishment of the interests of the British Empire, without the hazard of involving us in a contest with any party. . . . .The continuation of the contest between those chieftains would probably weaken the power, and impair the resources of both, and would afford to the British Government an opportunity of interposing its influence and mediation for the restoration of the Peishwa's just authority, under terms calculated to secure our relations with the Maratha Empire, on the basis of a general defensive alliance and reciprocal guarantee..."

* Grant Duff, p. 553.

He instructed the Resident at Puna "to adopt every practicable precaution to preclude every risk of hostilities between the British troops and those of Jashwant Rao Holkar, and to endeavour to secure the accomplishment of our views by means of amicable negotiation." In other words, the British troops were to assist Holkar against the Peshwa.

Reading the above extracts between the lines, no man possessing a grain of common sense can help thinking that the British were assisting Holkar against Sindhia. The very fact that no attempt was made to check Holkar, nay, on the contrary, the Resident was instructed "to preclude every risk of hostilities between the British troops and Jashwant Rao Holkar," is a strong evidence in support of the view that Holkar received every encouragement, direct and indirect, in his contest with Sindhia and the Peshwa. It should be borne in mind that the Peshwa was an ally of the British. Lord Cornwallis went to war with Tipu because the latter was understood to meditate an attack on the Raja of Travancore, who was an ally of the British. But in this instance, Holkar invaded and occupied the capital of their ally, the Peshwa, and yet the British did not even protest against Holkar's conduct.

When Sindhia left Puna for Malwa, he left behind at Puna five battalions of regular infantry and 10,000 horse. His troops were all well disciplined and equipped. Holkar's army consisted of rabbles compared to Sindhia's. It was between two such forces that the battle was fought at Puna on the 25th October, 1802. Of course, the Peshwa's troops fought along with those of Sindhia against Holkar's. There was thus every probability of Holkar meeting with defeat. But fortune smiled on him. He was victorious. The combined forces of Sindhia and the Peshwa were utterly routed.*

Wrote Herbert Spencer in 1851 :

"A cold-blooded treachery was the established policy of the authorities. Princes were betrayed into war with each other: and one of them having been helped to overcome his antagonist,

* It is also probable that Sindhia was betrayed by his European Officer, named Captain Fidele Filose. Sir Michael Filose writing in the *Asiatic Review* for April, 1889, thus spoke regarding Captain Fidele Filose's committing suicide:

"Surj Rao Ghatgay, the Maharaja's (Dowlat Rao's) father-in-law, was a man of great influence...... He now began to accuse Fidele Filose of being in correspondence with Jeswant Rao Holkar, and of seeking opportunity to betray his master Sindhia. These false accusations and the constant hostilities of Surj Rao so preyed on the mind of Fidele Filose that he committed suicide."

It appears to us that it was the guilty conscience of that officer of Sindhia which led him to commit suicide. Had there been no truth in the accusations brought against him, he would have either demanded an enquiry into his conduct or left the service of Sindhia. But since he did not adopt either of these measures, one is inclined to believe in his guilt.

Holkar's unexpected success also over Sindhia's troops add some force to the view that there was a traitor in the latter's camp. Who could have played the traitor's part so well as the European officers ? It is therefore not improbable that Surj Rao Ghatgay was not wrong in accusing Captain Fidele Filose of being in correspondence with Jashwant Rao Holkar and of seeking an opportunity to betray his master, Sindhia.

was then himself dethroned for some alleged misdemeanour. Always some muddied stream was at hand as pretext for official wolves."*

The Christian authorities in India in those days hetrayed the "heathen" Holkar and Sindhia into war with each other in order to ensnare the Peshwa. The following extracts from a publication with the following title-page,

"The history of Nana Sahib's claims against the East India Company, with extracts from Hindu sacred writings relative to the Law of Adoption, the will of the Ex-Peishwa, Badjee Rao, etc., compiled from original documents in the possession of the gentleman deputed to England to advocate Nana Sahib's case.

"I will a round unvarnished tale deliver."

Othello.

London :

Printed and published by C. H. Biddle,

26, New Castle Street, Strand."

confirm what Herbert Spencer wrote :

"When in the zenith of his power, he (Baji Rao) was one of those princes whose aid was evoked by the East India Company to crush the formidable Tippoo Sahib, but after the overthrow and death of that potentate, the Peishwa's rich territories excited their cupidity, and one occasion was soon found for interference in his affairs. The East India Company dispossessed the Nabob of Surat, who was tributary to Badjee Rao, and the latter would not forego his right to the tribute in their favour. They therefore incited Jeswant Rao, commonly known as Holkar, another Mahratta Chief, to attack him. In the first compaign, which took place in 1801, Badjee Rao was successful, but in the second defeated and forced to fly."

As Colonel Palmer had written to the Governor-General "that nothing short of imminent and certain destruction will induce him (the Peshwa) to make cessions," it appears probable, nay almost certain, "that imminent and certain destruction" should be made to stare him in the face. And this was easily to be effected by rendering aid to Holkar in his raids into the Peshwa's territory. It would have been unimperialistic policy, had the Governor-General and his agent withheld their assistance to Holkar in this crisis to which they were looking for years and which was to prove so beneficial to their interests in India.

The Peshwa, on hearing of the defeat sustained by his and Sindhia's forces, fled from Puna. Had he fled to Sindhia for protection, matters, perhaps, might have been again mended. But Sindhia had played the part of Frankenstein in creating this monster in the shape of the Peshwa. The English, also, were instilling poison into the mind of the Peshwa against Sindhia. Years previously he had been told by the Governor-General, that in an emergency, he would always be granted an asylum in Bombay.

Curiously enough, the British Resident did not accompany the Peshwa in his flight, but stayed on in Puna.

Grant Duff writes :

"Holkar sent an invitation to the Resident to come and see him on the following day, which Colonel Close did not think it prudent to decline......In his conversation.he (Holkar) was polite

Social Stat...

and frank,......and expressed himself in the most friendly manner towards the Resident and the British Government. He seemed extremely desirous of obtaining the mediation of the resident in settling with Sindhia and the Peishwa, and solicited Colonel Close, whom he detained about a month in Poona, to arbitrate in the existing differences."*

The Peshwa fled from Puna to Singarh and from thence to Raigarh. From Raigarh he retired to Mhar, and reached Bassein on 6th December, 1802.

The object of the British was now served. They had used Holkar as the cat's paw and now they did not care any longer to listen to his solicitations and requests.

The Peshwa was now to exchange King Log for King Stork. He was going to suffer the pythonic embrace of the British. At Bassein, he agreed to those very terms which he had been made to decline year after year, and month after month by the great Nana Fadnavis and Dowlat Rao Sindhia. On his neck was yoked the scheme of the Subsidiary Alliance. On the 31st December, he concluded the ignoble Treaty of Bassein which sealed the doom of the independence of the Marathas, nay it sounded the death-knell of the independence of India. No longer were the peoples of India to dream of regaining their lost independence.

Nana Fadnavis's prophecy came to be fulfilled. He had opposed the raising of the son of the weak-minded Raghoba to the Peshwa's *masnad* on the ground of "the danger to be apprehended from the connection between his family and the English." Any other strong-minded Peshwa would not have been so easily ensnared by them, as was the imbecile Baji Rao.

* P. 558

CHAPTER XXIII

THE TREATY OF BASSEIN AND THE RETURN OF THE PESHWA TO PUNA

The treaty of Bassein was the subject of much discussion at the hands of the English politicians in the beginning of the last century. No doubt, that treaty serves as a landmark in the history of the British occupation of India. It was the thin end of the wedge introduced into the Maratha politics which had the effect of destroying the Confederacy and thus indirectly bringing about the downfall of the Maratha power.

For nearly half a century the English had been trying to dismember the Confederacy: they flattered and pitted one against the other. No success had yet attended their machinations, although they had handled the different members with great dexterity and unscrupulousness. But the treaty of Bassein effected this dismemberment and the wishes of the British were accomplished, beyond their expectation.

It has been already stated that the Treaty of Subsidiary Alliance which the Nizam had concluded with the British had given great offence to the different Maratha States. The Treaty of Bassein not only deprived the Peshwa of his independence, but was calculated to deprive the remaining Maratha States of their freedom of action and consequently alarmed all the members of the Confederacy, excepting perhaps the Holkar. The provisions of the Treaty leave no room for doubt that such was the intention of those who framed it. Moreover, the Marquess Wellesley had never concealed his opinion, that, by one of the Maratha States contracting an alliance with the English,

"every one of the Mahratta states would become dependent upon the English Government; those who accepted the alliance, by the alliance; those who did not accept it, by being deprived of it."*

Before we discuss the different articles of this Treaty, let us advert to the proceedings of Holkar at Puna. After defeating the combined forces of Sindhia and the Peshwa, Holkar did not pursue the fugitive Peshwa Baji Rao. Had he done so, there would have remained still some hope of the British not gaining an ascendency in the Maratha Empire. The capture of Baji Rao's person would have saved the dissolution of the Mahratta confederacy. It has been stated before that Barry Close did not accompany Baji Rao in his flight, but remained at Puna in Holkar's camp, too. It is probable that Holkar was prevailed upon by him not to give an early chase to the fugitive Peshwa. The capture of the person of Bájí Rao would have undone the machinations of the English and hence Colonel Barry Close remained at Puna to watch the proceedings of Holkar. It should not be forgotten that the English had interested motives in preventing Baji Rao from falling into the hands of Holkar or any other member of the Maratha Confederacy. Writes Mill :†

"Colonel Barry Close had been sent in the capacity of Resident to Poona, in the month of December of the preceding year (1801), with much reliance upon his approved ability and diligence for

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* Mill, Hist. Vol. vi, p. 271.

† VI, p. 274.

leading the Peishwa to a conformity with the earnest wishes of the English Government, on the subject of the defensive alliance."

Day after day this officer had tried to rivet the chain of slavery round the neck of the Peshwa. But at first it seemed to him that there was no likelihood of the Peshwa bending his neck to the Resident for fastening the chain. Almost in despair the Resident wrote to the Governor-General :

"Every day's experience tends to strengthen the impression, that from the first, your Lordship's amicable and liberal views, in relation to this State, have not only been discordant with the natural disposition of the Peishwa ; but totally adverse to that selfish and wicked policy, which, in a certain degree, he seems to have realized : a slight recurrence to the history of his machinations is sufficient to demonstrate, that, in the midst of personal peril, and the lowest debasement, he viewed the admission of permanent support from your Lordship with aversion." *

This is how the Resident represented to the Governor-General the Peshwa's love of independence !

But slowly and silently, the poison which the Resident was steadily instilling into the mind of the Peshwa, produced its desired effect. The Peshwa, as said in the previous chapter, was willing to subsidize troops officered by the English, under certain restrictions. The Governor-General was not reluctant to consent to the Peshwa's proposals.

But when Holkar came to the vicinity of Puna, Baji Rao even waived his objection to locate European troops within his own Dominions.† After having ensnared the Peshwa, does it stand to reason, that the Resident should not have taken steps to prevent his falling into the hands of Holkar ?

When Holkar could not capture Baji Rao, he placed on the Peshwa's *masnad* a creature of his own in the person of Amrut Rao, who was the adopted son of Raghoba. At one time, Raghoba had given up all hopes of his wife ever giving birth to a son and heir to him, and hence he had adopted Amrut Rao. But unluckily for the Marathas, in his old age, Roghoba's wife presented him with a couple of sons of whom Baji Rao was the elder. Holkar's choice of Amrut Rao was not a bad one. The British Resident did not raise any objection to this procedure of Holkar. But now he sneaked away om Puna and joined Baji Rao.

Holkar had served as the cat's paw to the British. Their object was gained. It was necessary now to restore Baji Rao to the Peshwa's *masnad.* Mill writes :

"Two grand objects now solicited the attention of the British Government. The first was the restoration of the Peishwa, and his elevation to that height of power, which nominally his, actually that of the British Government, might suffice to control the rest of the Mahratta States. The next was to improve this event for imposing a similar treaty upon others of the more powerful Mahratta princes ; or, at any rate, to prevent, by all possible means, their alarm from giving birth to an immediate war, which (specially in the existing state of the finances) might expose the present arrangement to both unpopularity and trouble." §

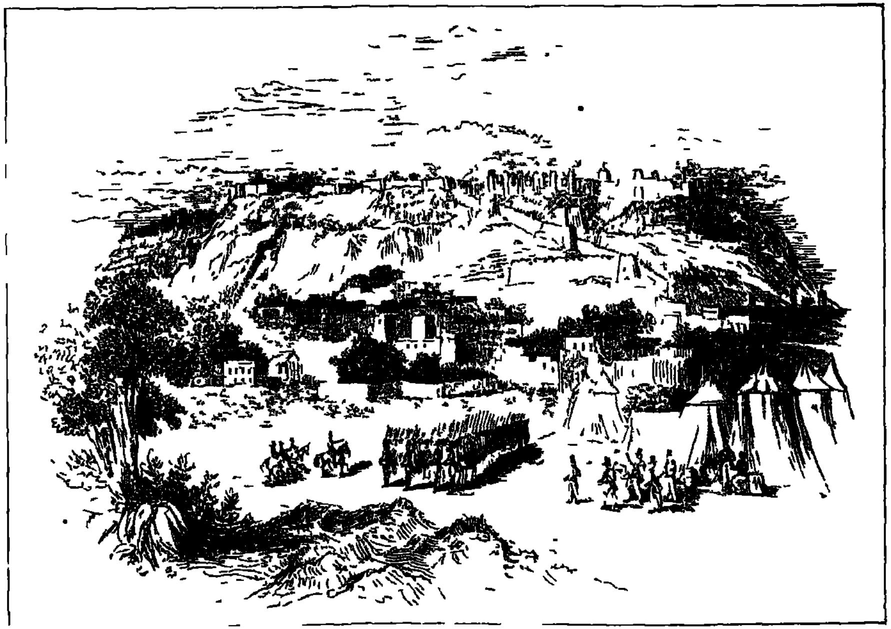
Mill was not in possession of all the despatches of the Marquess Wellesley when he

* *Ibid.*, p. 275.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 277-278.

§ *Ibid.*, p. ?78.

Dowlat Rao Sindhia



Fortress of Gwalior

wrote the above, otherwise he would have stated that the Governor-General had been making every preparation for a war with the Marathas, for he knew that the other Maratha states would not allow the Peshwa to fall into the pythonic embrace of the British without a struggle to snatch him from their coils. Sindhia, in particular, could not look unconcernedly on the Peshwa adopting this suicidal policy. Although

"the wishes of the Governor-General were accomplished, beyond his expectation ; and he ratified the engagement on the day on which it was received ;*

yet such were his ideas of honesty and faithfulness, that he wanted to extort more concessions from the fugitive Peshwa. He was, therefore, in no hurry to get Baji Rao back to Puna. Mill writes :

"As a delay in the advance of the troops might afford the further advantage of improving the terms of the defensive alliance with the Peishwa, by obtaining his consent to those conditions which he heretofore rejected, the Resident was informed that there was no occasion to be in a hurry, in commencing operations for the reinstatement of the Peishwa." †

In the meanwhile, Holkar was the monarch of all he surveyed at Puna. He was let loose on the Peshwa's subjects and he was not a statesman, he did know how to turn the opportunity to good account. He could have organized a government, but instead of doing that, he was plundering the people. In this, how far he was instigated by the British Resident, it is impossible to say. Captain Grant-Duff writes :

"For a short time after his victory, Holkar assumed an appearance of great moderation."§

But further on he writes :

"The moderation at first shown by Holkar after his victory was a mere cloak to allure Bajee Rao to return to his capital. Being in distress for funds to pay his troops, Holkar, in order to satify the most urgent of their demands, was obliged to levy a contribution from the city of Poona."**

It should be remembered that Colonel Barry Close was in the camp of Holkar, and from the records it does not appear that he ever protested against Holkar's proceedings. He connived at, and most probably instigated, Holkar's excesses. It was in this manner that the English were befriending their absent ally !

It was, however, found necessary to reinstate Baji Rao. All the much-coveted concessions had been extorted from him and he was now reduced to the unenviable position of a dependant. The steps which the Governor-General took for restoring the Peshwa were those which he had thought out three years previously, when under the pretence of pursuing Dhoondhia Waugh, his brother Colonel Arthur Wellesley had been secretly instructed to march on to Puna, if the crisis of affairs there necessitated him to do so.

Lord Clive was still the Governor of Madras and he received instructions to assemble troops on the Mysore frontier. He did it with an alacrity which highly pleased the Governor-General. In a private letter to him, the Marquess Wellesley wrote from Barrackpur, 7th January, 1803 :

* *Ibid.*, p. 278.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

§ P. 358, *Times of India* reprint.

** P. 565.

"The exertions which you have made for the early assembling of the army on the frontier of Mysore, were extremely seasonable and judicious."

The Governor-General anticipated hostilities with the Marathas and was getting ready for that eventuality. When four years previously, he waged war against Tipu, he himself went to Madras to be near the scene of operations. This time, too, he was anxious to be somewhere near Puna. It appears to us that one of the reasons which prompted the Governor-General in his delay in reinstating the Peshwa, was, in all likelihood, his preparation to get ready for a war with the Marathas. He quite expected it. But with that dissimulation which characterizes European diplomatists, he wrote to Lord Clive on 7th January, 1803 :

My views are anxiously directed to the object of avoiding hostilities, and I request your Lordship to bear this principle in mind throughout every contingency which may call for your decision. I entertain a sanguine hope of accomplishing the great arrangement of establishing a British subsidiary force at Poonah, without proceeding to extremities with any party. . . . . The pacific conclusion, however, of these extraordinary commotions, may depend so essentially on the degree of despatch with which questions may be decided of a nature exclusively and necessarily reserved for the personal decision of the Governor-General that I am desirous of proceeding with all practical expedition to some point from which I can easily reach the principal scene of negotiation, and direct the daily course of measures according to the variation of circumstances and events."*

There had been a change in the office of the Commander-in-Chief in India. Sir Alured Clarke had been succeeded by General Lake. As this man played a very conspicuous part in the Second Maratha War, it is necessary to narrate his career previous to his arrival in India. He was in the confidence of Pitt, the Prime Minister of England. The country which owned the then Governor-General of India, Lord Wellesley, as one of her sons, had been made the scene of "free rape," bloodshed and murder by the instructions of Pitt and the gallant (?) deeds of General Lake. The latter had qualified himself for the high office of the Commander-in-Chief by the manner in which he had helped Pitt in his scheme of uniting Ireland to Great Britain.

The great Irish orator and patriot, William O'Brien, wrote in the *Contemporary Review* for January, 1898 :

"It was Mr. Pitt who paved the way for it, it was Mr. Pitt who gave the signal for it, it was Mr. Pitt who turned all its horrors to account for the accomplishment of a Union which could never have been effected by fair means, nor even by the foul means of pecuniary corruption without it. The first object of Mr. Pitt and his Irish creatures was to make Parliamentary reform impossible, and keep the Parliament corrupt in order to subsequently kill it by driving upright men from reform to revolutionary courses ; in other words, to terrorise the Parliament with a rebellion, as well as bribe it with gold."

The part played by General Lake in this nefarious scheme of Pitt, has been very ably drescribed by Mr. W. T. Stead in his "Review of Reviews" for July, 1898. He writes :

"General Lake, a truculent ruffian, whose character may well be discerned in the sulphurous fury of his letters, was Commander-in-Chief, with a free hand to strike terror in Ulster. He wrote on one occasion ·

* Wellesley Desp., iv, p. 27.

'I much fear those villains (the Presbyterians of Ulster) will not give us the opportunity of treating them in the summary way we all wish. You may rest assured they won't have much mercy if we can once begin. Surely the *Northern Star* (a Protestant Belfast paper) should be stopped . . . . May I not be allowed to seize and burn the whole apparatus ? Belfast must be punished most severely. I'll do all I can to thin the country of these rebellious scoundrels by sending them on board the tender.'

He complained that complete martial law had not been proclaimed. 'I wish we had complete power to destroy their houses, or try some of them by *our law* if they did not bring in their arms.'. . . . .

"The excesses of General Lake in the North drove desperate men by thousands into the ranks of the United Irishmen."

Such was the "truculent ruffian" who was sent out to India as its Commander-in-Chief. General Lake was not a military genius, for none of his victories could be pronounced brilliant, or displays faultless military tactics. But the authorities in England were highly pleased with him, because he had helped in bringing about the Union of Ireland with England. At that time, the English were straining their every nerve to extend their dominions in India and rob the Indian princes of their cherished rights and independence. So their choice naturally fell on Lake, for no other person could have carried out more admirably their intentions than this man, because to reduce Indian princes to dependence, the same tactics were needed which had proved so successful in cowing down the natives of Ireland. For all military operations, Lake was the confidential adviser of the Governor-General, as he was bound to be, because he had ill-treated the latter's countrymen and countrywomen and because the Governor-General was a traitor to the country of his birth. In his 'most secret and confidential' letter to General Lake, dated Barrackpur, January 7th, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote :

"I have been desirous for some time past to communicate to you the interesting state of affairs in the Mahratta Empire, and the course of policy which I have adopted, with a view to derive every attainable advantage from this singular crisis.

"The power, whose views might be most apprehended, and whom it is most important to hold in check, is certainly Scindhia. No serious or alarming opposition is to be feared from any other quarter, and I am inclined to believe that even Scindhia will act a neutral, at least, if not an amicable part. . . . Our most effectual mode of controlling Scindhia must be an irruption into his dominions in Hindustan, from the ceded provinces of Oude ; and in that case, the main and most critical effort must be made from the quarter where you are now present.

"The result of this reasoning is, that if any serious contest should arise, (which, however, I do not expect) the most important operations will be directed against Scindhia's possessions to the destruction of his power in Hindustan ; and that no probability exists of any important contest in the Deccan.

"Indeed my determination is so fixed to employ every effort for the purpose of avoiding hostilities, that I think it scarcely possible that I can be disappointed in any hope of preserving peace. *And my plan is, therefore, rather to form such arrangements as may present the most powerful and menacing aspect to every branch of the Maratha Empire, on every point on their frontier, than to prepare any separate army with a view to one distinct operation.*"*

The italicised sentences in the above clearly prove that the Governor-General intended to provoke the Marathas to war. He could not have believed the Marathas

* *Despatches*, iv, pp. 28-29.

to be such fools or children as not to be alarmed at the military preparation he was making on such a large scale 'on every point of their frontier' or to rouse their suspicion that the English aimed at them. Four years previously, when the Subsidary Alliance was forced on the Nizam, there had not been any warlike preparation on such a large scale as was now considered necessary to restore Baji Rao to power. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the Marques Wellesley expressed his opinion that Baji Rao was quite popular with his subjects and that they would hail with satisfaction his restoration to power. In a 'secret official' letter to Lord Clive, dated Fort William, February 2, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote :

"The stipulations of treaty on which I found my intention to facilitate the restoration of the Peishwa's authority, originated in a supposition that the majority of the Mahratta Jageerdars, and that the body of the Peishwa's subjects entertained a desire of co-operating in that measure. Justice and wisdom would forbid any attempt to impose upon the Mahrattas a ruler, whose restoration to authority was adverse to the wishes of every class of his subjects. The spirit of our recent engagements with the Peishwa, involved no obligation of such an extent. *Whatever might be the success of our arms, the ultimate object of those engagements could not be attained by a course of policy so violent and extreme.* If, therefore, it should appear that a decided opposition to the restoration of the Peishwa is to be expected from the majority of the Mahratta Jageerdars, and from the body of the Peishwa's subjects, I should instantly relinquish every attempt to restore the Peishwa to the *musnad* of Poonah."*

If the Governor-General's supposition was a fact, namely, that the Maratha *jagirdars* and the Peshwa's subjects desired the restoration of Baji Rao, where was the necessity, then, of the warlike preparations on such a large scale ? But was it true, that the *jagirdars* and the Peshwa's subjects generally were desirous of the restoration of Baji Rao ? The Governor-General knew perfectly well, that that was not true. The *jagirdars* of the Southern Maratha country had raised the standard of rebellion against, and thrown away their allegiance to Baji Rao. A force had been sent to subdue them. This had happened in the life-time of Nana Fadnavis. After the death of that great Maratha statesman, there was no change for the better in the feelings of those *jagirdars* towards the Peshwa. If anything, they were now playing into the hands of the English.

That such was the real fact will be evident by narrating the history of the Patwardhan family. After the death of Nana Fadnavis, the Peshwa Baji Rao was so jealous of the Patwardhan family that he meditated their ruin. Grant Duff writes :

"One of the ruling passions of the Peishwa was implacable revenge ; and he having connived at the destruction of the Shenwee Brahmins, Sindhia, in return, agreed to assist him in the ruin of the friends and adherents of Nana, and the family of the late Pureshram Bhow Putwurdhum. . . . In regard to the latter object, of crushing the Putwurdhun family, Scindhia the more readily acquiesced in i t, as he had long wished to possess himself of their extensive and fertile jagheer. It was this plot which prevented the capture of Kolapoor ; as Appa Sahib, having received timely intelligence of their plan, quitted the siege."†

The fact of the ill-treatment of the Patwardhan family was so notorious that the Governor-General's brother, Col. Arthur Wellesley, tried to take advantage of this in

* *Despatches, iv, p. 42.*

† P. 550

reducing the independence of the Peshwa. On the 20th August, 1800, he wrote to Major (afterwards Sir Thomas) Munro :

"Sindhia's influence at Poonah is too great for us ; and I see plainly, that, if Colonel Palmer remains there, we shall not be able to curb him without going to war. *There was never such an opportunity for it as the present moment ; and probably by bringing forward, and by establishing in their ancient possession, the Bhow's family under our protection, we should counterbalance Sindhia, and secure our own tranquility for a great length of time.*"

There was not much love lost between the Peshwa and the Patwardhan family. The Patwardhan family did not desire the restoration of the Peshwa Baji Rao. But that family were now under the protection of the English. So the wish of the latter came with the force of an order to them. This will be evident from the letter of Major-General Wellesley to General Stuart. Dating his letter from Seringapatam, 4th December, 1802, Arthur Wellesley wrote :

"The Putwurdan family (Pursharam Bhow's) are exactly in the state in which you could wish them to be, *viz.*, in anxious expectation of future events, and intending to adopt a line of conduct suitable thereto ; or, in other words, to take part with the strongest."

This does not mean that the members of the Patwardhan family were particularly anxious for the restoration of Baji Rao to the Peshwa's *Masnad* at Puna. Yet Arthur Wellesley's statement that the Patwardhan family would "take part with the strongest" was construed by the Governor-General and other Englishmen as meaning that they would be glad to see the restoration of Baji Rao.

Arthur Wellesley's letter, from which an extract has been given above, does not bear that interpretation. Yet General Stuart, to whom the Governor-General's brother wrote the letter, considered himself justified in informing Lord Clive, the Governor of Madras, on 23rd February, 1803, that

"Major-General Wellesley has reported to me, that the Sirdar, whom he employs in the Mahratta districts, has sent in a recent communication, a very favorable account of the dispositions of the chiefs of the Putwurdhun family, every one of whom has declared his intention of adhering to the cause of the Peshwah."*

It seems probable that the Patwardhans and the Southern Jagirdars were coerced into expressing their favourable sentiments towards the restoration of the Peshwa Baji Rao. In another part of the letter from which an extract has been given above, Lieut-General Stuart wrote to Lord Clive :

"The actual advance of a part of the subsidiary force, the recent movements of Holkar's troops towards the southward, and the danger threatened by the disposition of the army of that chieftain to the tranquility of his Highness the Nizam's dominions, . . . lead me to expect that your Lordship will judge it expedient to order the early advance of a considerable proportion of this army, for the purpose of supporting the subsidiary force, and *of encouraging the Mahratta jaghirdars to co-operate in restoring the Peshwa's authority.*"

The italicised words in the above extract, if they have any significance in diplomatic language, mean that the Jaghirdars should be coerced into accepting the Peshwa Baji Rao's authority.

* Wellington *Despatches*, I. p. 104.

So it was not true when the Governor-General wrote that

"The restoration of the Peshwa's authority originated in a supposition that the majority of the Mahratta jaghirdars, . . ., entertain a desire of co-operating in that measure."

Let us now see how far the statement of the Governor-General, that "the body of the Peshwa's subjects" entertained a desire for his restoration, is borne out by facts.

It was in the beginning of the year 1802 that Colonel Barry Close wrote:

"With regard to the Peshwa's government, it seems, if possible, to become less respectable every day. *The great families of the state, with whom he is at variance, prevail over him at every contest.*"*

The italicised words do not show that the Peshwa's subjects were anxious for his restoration.

Colonel Barry Close further wrote :—

"If the Peishwa should ever conclude subsidiary engagements on these terms, he would never apply for the aid of the stipulated force, except in cases of the utmost emergency; and his expectation probably is, that the knowledge of his ability to command so powerful a body of troops would alone be sufficient to give due weight to his authority, and to preclude any attempt which might otherwise be made for the subversion of it."†

Does it prove the popularity of Baji Rao?

Besides, the Governor-General himself was fully acquainted with the character of Baji Rao and he knew perfeclly well that he was not the proper man to rule the Marathas. Mill writes :

"In 1798, when the Nizam consented to transfer the military powers of government within his dominions to the English, a similar proposal of 'general defensive alliance, and mutual guarantee,' as it is called by Lord Wellesley, was strongly pressed upon the Peshwa. The moment was conceived to be favorable. '*The authority of Bajee Rao,*' says the Governor-General, '*was then reduced to a state of extreme weakness by the imbecility of his councils, by the instability and treachery of his disposition, and by the prevalence of internal discord*"§

The words in italics clearly show the estimate which the Marquess Wellesley had formed of Baji Rao. It was, therefore, hypocrisy pure and simple and want of veracity on the part of the Governor-General to declare that

"Justice and wisdom would forbid any attempt to impose upon the Mahrattas a ruler, whose restoration to authority was adverse to every class of his subjects."**

Regarding the restoration of the Peshwa to authority, Mill has very ably exposed the hypocrisy of the Governor-General. He writes :

"This virtuous example, till such a time as the majority of the people in every civilized country have become sufficiently enlightened to see the depravity of the case in its own essence, will help to stamp with infamy the most flagitious perhaps of all the crimes which can be committed against human nature, the imposing upon a nation, by force of foreign armies, and for the pleasure or interest of foreign rulers, a government composed of men, and involving principles, which the people

* Mill, vi. p. 276.
† *Ibid.*, p. 276.
§ *Ibid.*, p, 261.
** *Ibid.*, p. 285.

for whom it is destined have either rejected from experience of their badness, or repel from their experience or expectation of better. Even where the disparity of civilization and knowledge were very great and where it was beyond dispute, that a civilized country was about to bestow upon a barbarous one the greatest of all possible benefits, a good and beneficent government; even here, it would require the strongest circumstances to justify the employment of violence or force. But. where nations, upon a level only with another in point of civilization, or perhaps below it, proceed with bayonets to force upon it a government confessedly bad, and prodigiously below the knowledge and civilization of the age under the pretence of fears that such a nation will choose a worse government for itself, these nations, or their rulers, if the people have no voice in the matter, are guided by views of benefit to themselves, and despise the shame of trampling upon the first principles of humanity and justice.

"In paying the homage which he counted due to the will of a nation of Mahrattas, the Marquis Wellesley was not making a sacrifice of interests which he held in low esteem. In his address to the home authorities, dated the 24th of December, 1802, he declared his conviction, that 'those defensive engagements which he was desirous of concluding with the Mahratta states, were essential to the complete consolidation of the British Empire in India, and to the future tranquility of Hindustan.' *Yet the complete consolidation of the British Empire in India, and the future tranquility of Hindustan,* which could never exist till a sufficient bridle was put in the mouth of the Mahratta power, he thought it his duty to sacrifice, or to leave to the care of unforeseen events, rather than violate the freedom of will, in this important concern, of the people of one of the Mahratta States."*

The truth is, it has been the policy of the English, ever since the days of Clive, to place the wrong man on the throne of a state and thus to try the patience of the subjects and provoke them to rebellion. It is nonsense, if not cant and hypocrisy, to talk of the measure as conducing to the welfare of the nation over whom the English place their own creature to rule.

The Governor-General intentionally delayed the restoration of Baji Rao. His principal reason for this delay, according to his own admission, was to extort more concessions from the Peshwa. But, as said before, it is probable that the Governor-General was making preparations for the war which he knew would be the inevitable consequence of restoring Baji Rao to the Peshwa's *masnad* under the protection of the British.

In the meanwhile, Baji Rao was getting impatient of his self-imposed exile. He was anxiously looking forward to the help promised to him by his Christian friends. For his own part, he had agreed to everything which they had dictated to him. But they were very slow in fulfilling their promise. He was not content with the negotiations with the Bombay Government. To expedite matters, he opened negotiations also with the Governor-General's brother, Arthur Wellesley, who was Governor of Mysore territory. He entrusted Bapu Ganesh Gokhale with these negotiations, who sent a Vakil to Seringapatam to know the terms on which Arthur Wellesley would treat with the Peshwa. Gokhale had interested motives in the restoration of Baji Rao. This will be evident from Arthur Wellesley's letters. Dating his letter from Seringapatam, 2nd December, 1802, Major-General Wellesley wrote to General Stuart, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Fort St. George:

"A vakeel from Goklah, the commanding officer of the Peishwa's troops on the frontier, arrived here yesterday, and, according to the tenor of the orders I formerly received from the Right Honourable the Governor in Council upon this subject, I had a communication with him this morning."

* Ibid., pp. 286-287.

On the 4th December, 1802, he communicated to General Stuart the purport of the conversation he had with Gokhale's Vakil. He wrote :

"Bapoojee Goneish Goklah was the person who arrested the person of Holkar (Vithojee), afterwards put to death by order of the Peishwa ; in consequence thereof he has nothing to expect from Jeswant Rao Holkar, ...

"I took an opportunity this morning of enterning into a general conversation regarding the views and objects, and probable line of conduct, of all the Mahratta chiefs in this part of India, in the present crisis of Mahratta affairs. It is obvious that Goklah must be very decided in his conduct ; he has no favour to expect from Holkar, and this is probably the reason for which he, so immediately after his success, despatched this vakeel to me. The vakeel says that the Putwardhun family (Pursheram Bhow's) are exactly in the state in which you could wish them to be, *viz.*, in anxious expectation of future events, and intending to adopt a line of conduct suitable thereto, ; or, in other words, to take part with the strongest."

So, after all, the truth regarding the expressed desire of the Maratha Jagirdars for the restoration of Baji Rao is out. This so-called desire of the Jagirdars for the restoration of the Peshwa was a fabrication of Arthur Wellesley. It was a conspiracy formed by the Governor-General's brother with Gokhale to coerce the Jagirdardars and thus to facilitate the march of British troops to Puna.

There were troops assembled on the Mysore frontier, and on the Nizam's frontier. Dating his letter to Lord Clive from Fort William, 2nd February, 1803, the Governor-General wrote that

"the objects of assembling British troops on the frontier of Mysore were, the effectual defence of our possession during the convulsed state of the Mahratta Empire ; and the eventual establishment of a subsidiary force at Poonah, under the operation of the general defensive alliance concluded with the Peishwa."

On the 3rd February, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley's Secretary, named Mr. N. B. Edmonstone, wrote to Colonel Close, that

"in pursuance of the plan of operations which his Excellency resolved to adopt, orders will be immediately issued to the resident at Hyderabad, authorising him to direct the advance of the whole of the subsidiary force for the purpose of forming a junction with the army of his Highness the Nizam and of occupying, in conjunction with that army, a position on the frontier of his Highness' territory, most favourable for the march of that force to Poonah."

When all these preparations for war were complete, then the Peshwah was ordered (that is the proper expression to use) to return to Puna. For this purpose, he had been furnished with an escort of 2,300 infantry, of whom 1,200 were British. He returned to Puna and resumed his seat on the *masnad* on the 13th May, 1803.

For his return to Puna, as said before, it was necessary to march the forces that had assembled on the frontiers of Mysore and the Nizam's dominions towards Puna. Major-General Wellesley was placed in command of the former and Colonel Stevenson of the latter. The reasons for appointing Arthur Wellesley to the command are set forth by Lord Clive in his letter, dated Fort St. George, the 27th February, 1803, to General Stuart :

"The practical experience obtained by Major General the Hon. A. Wellesley, on the immediate theatre of the intended operations, combined with the personal intercourse established between that

officer and the Mahratta Chiefs on the frontier, and supported by the 'great ability uniformly manifested by that officer in various situations of difficulty, renders me solicitous that he should be selected for the command of the advancing detachment."

It will be remembered that when the British troops were permitted to pursue Dhoondhia Waugh in the Maratha territories, Arthur Wellesley was in command of those troops. The experience which he gained there and on which he based his "Memorandum upon operations in the Maratha territory," befitted him for the responsible position of the commandant. Moreover, he was a past master in the arts of intrigue and conspiracy. It was these qualifications of Arthur Wellesley to which Lord Clive very probably referred, when he wrote about "the personal intercourse established between that officer (A. Wellesley) and the Maratha Chiefs on the frontier."

The force under Major-General Wellesley amounted to nearly eleven thousand and that under Colonel Stevenson to nearly seven thousand. On the 3rd March, 1803, General Stuart wrote to Lord Clive :

"I have directed the divisions of the army to assemble at Hurryhur on the 6th instant, and I expect that the detachment under Major-General the Honourable Arthur Wellesley will be able to commence its march into the Mahratta territory on the 8th."

On the 9th March, 1803, General Stuart wrote to Arthur Wellesley :

"You have already been apprised of your appointment to the command of a detachment destined to advance into the Mahratta territory. . . . .

"Although I have considered it to be expedient to avoid prescribing the particular plan of the operations of your detachment, yet I judge it necessary to state certain principal objects which, in my judgment, ought to regulate the course of your proceedings.

1. "To encourage the southern jaghirdars to declare in favor of the Peishwah's cause ; to employ every means to reconcile their mutual animosities, and to induce them to unite their forces with the advancing detachment, for the purpose of re-establishing his Highness's Government. [Why was there any need 'to encourage the Southern 'jaghirdars to declare in favor of the Peishwa's cause,' when the Governor-General had already expressed his opinion that the jaghirdars 'entertained a desire of co-operating in that measure' ? In the language of British diplomacy, 'to encourage' means to coerce.']

2. "To proceed to Meritch, and form a junction with the Peishwa ; or should that measure be deemed inadvisable on the part of his Highness, with such of his chieftains and troops as may be able to meet you there.

3. "To open a communication, and form a junction with the subsidiary force under Colonel Stevenson, and the contingent of his Highness the Nizam.

4. "To proceed eventually to Poonah, and establish an order of things in that capital, favorable to the return of the Peishwah, and the attainment of the ends of the late treaty."

The big force under the command of Major-General Wellesley was principally intended to coerce the jagirdars. This is not only evident from what has been said above, but Leiut.-General Stuart, on the 9th March, 1803, distinctly instructed Arthur Wellesley to coerce the jagirdars. He wrote :

"I have not noticed in the foregoing orders the conduct to be observed on your part, in case of opposition of any chieftain ; and in particular of Jeswant Rao Holkar, from whom we are led to expect most opposition to your proceedings.

"The instructions of the Governor-General and Lord Clive contain no orders, and afford no positive rule to guide my determination on this important head. I infer, however, from the spirit of

those instructions, that if the majority of the southern jaghirdars, and the sentiments of the body of the people, are found to declare in favor of the restoration of Bajee Rao, the British detachment ought to persevere in the endeavours to re-establish his authority; and should the detachment, during the prosecution of that endeavour, encounter the hostility of any individual jaghirdar, that they are to employ, in concert with the well-affected jaghirdars, every practicable means to overcome his opposition. In the event, therefore, of any single feudatory opposing resistance to the restoration of the Peishwah, after you have ascertained that the sentiments of the majority of the chieftains are favorable to that measure, I am of opinion that the instructions which I have received justify one in authorising you to compel his submission."*

But General Stuart did not say what Major-General A. Wellesley should have done, had 'the majority of the chieftains' been unfavourable to the restoration of the Peshwa. He left that contingency out of consideration altogether. Reading between the lines, there can be no-doubt that his instructions to Major-General Wellesley amounted to coercing the jaghirdars to submission.

His expectation of opposition from Jashwunt Rao Holkar was not well-founded. The Governor-General, at least, did not expect any opposition from him. Dating his 'most secret and confidential' letter to General Lake, from Barrackpur, January 17, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:

"The power, whose views might be most apprehended, and whom it is most important to hold in check, is certainly Scindhia. No serious or alarming opposition is to be feared from any other quarter."

This was quite true. Holkar never offered any resistance to the prosecution of the ambitious designs of the English. On the contrary, he was used as a cat's paw by them and so it would have been absurd to expect any opposition from him.

It is impossible to know the exact nature of the instructions which General Stuart received from the Governor-General. But from the latter's letter to him, we can easily guess that the Marquess Wellesley gave him instructions which were so Machiavellian in character that he did not consider it wise to put them on paper. Dating his letter, marked "Private and Confidential," from Fort William, February 8, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to His Excellency General Stuart as follows:

"The favourable appearance of affairs at Poonah, combined with the pressure of various circumstances in our situation at this Presidency, has induced me to relinquish my intention of proceeding to Fort St. George in the present season. I have sent Major Malcolm to Madras with an appointment to Mysore, and as he is fully acquainted with every sentiment of my mind respecting the actual crisis of affairs in the Mahratta Empire, I have referred Lord Clive to him on every point which may appear doubtful or deficient in my instructions. You will also find Major Malcolm completely apprized of the views which I entertain with regard to the operations of the army, and I request that you will accordingly admit him to your confidence, and *receive through him such communications from me, as it is not practicable to commit to paper,*"

From the words put in italics, it is not difficult to guess the nature of his instructions.

Colonel Stevenson was placed under the orders of General Wellesley. General Stuart wrote to the latter:

"The instructions to Colonel Stevenson, which I have ordered to be furnished to you, will explain

* Wellington *Despatches*, I. p. 114.

the measures prescribed to that officer. I have instructed him to communicate regular information of his proceedings and situation to you, and to obey your orders,"

General Wellesley, when fully equipped with the instructions above referred to, commenced his march from Hurryhur on the 9th of March and crossed the Tumbadra river on the 12th. It was an uneventful march so far as there was no resistance against him from any one of the jagheerdars or other Maratha chieftains. In the official records, this "amicable conduct of the jagheerdars and the inhabitants" is attributed to "the fame which the British arms had acquired in the campaign under General Wellesley's command against Dhoondhia Waugh."* But it was more probably due to the large army he had under his command by means of which he experienced no difficulty to coerce and overawe all the chiefs and jagirdars.

When General Wellesley was not far from Puna, Colonel Barry Close, the resident with the Peshwa, spread the rumour that Amrut Rao had it in contemplation to burn the city of Puna. Amrut Rao was Holkar's creature, but dissensions had arisen between them which led Holkar to desert him. It is very probable that the English had a hand in producing dissensions between the two. For, we find Lord Wellesley writing to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors on the 14th February, 1803, as follows:

"Dissensions have arisen between Amrut Row and Jeswunt Holkar, which may be expected to produce a separation of interests between those chieftains. . . . That chieftain (Holkar) has repeated his propositions in a modified form to the Resident, for an accommodation with the Peishwa, and has solicited the mediation of the Resident, and of the Peishwa, for the satisfaction of his demands upon Dowlut Rao Scindhia. As a proof of his sincerity, Jeswunt Rao Holkar has signified his intention of sending the females of the Peishwa's family to His Highness at Bassein; Jeswunt Rao Holkar has been equally earnest in soliciting the mediation of His Highness the Nizam."

It is probable that the pro-British proclivities of Holkar disgusted Amrut Rao and brought about the dissensions between them. But the report about the burning of Puna was an utterly absurd one.

The object in spreading the rumour appears to have been to hurry on General Wellesley's advance to Puna. This is evident from his letter to the Governor-General. Dating his letter from Puna, 21st April, 1803, he wrote:

"I arrived here yesterday with the Cavalry of my division.

"I had received repeated intimations from Colonel Close, that Amrut Rao, who still remained at Poonah, intended to burn that city, ... I therefore determined to march forward with the British Cavalry and the Mahrattas, as soon as I should arrive within a long forced march from Poonah. In the meantime, I received intelligence that Amrut Rao was still in the neighbourhood on the 18th; and that he had removed the Peishwa's family to Sevaghur, a measure which was generally supposed to be preparatory to burning the town; and I marched on the 19th, at night, above forty miles to this place, making the total distance which the Cavalry have marched, since the 19th in the morning, about sixty miles.

"Amrut Rao heard of our march yesterday morning, and marched off with some precipitation, leaving the town in safety. It is generally believed here, that he intended to burn it and that it was saved only by our arrival. The infantry will come here to-morrow."

None but a fool could have believed in the report that Amrut Rao intended to burn the city. Why did he not do so, when he had every opportunity of burning it? Even at the last moment, when he "marched off with some precipitation," he had time

* Wellington *Despatches*, I, p. 118.

enough to set fire to the city of Puna. The report is so absurd, that it is useless to say more about it.

All the objects which General Wellesley had been instructed by Stuart to carry out, were now gained. One of his instructions ran:

"To proceed eventually to Poonah, and establish an order of things in that Capital, favorable to the return of the Peishwah, and the attainment of the ends of the late treaty."

On his arrrival at Puna, he set himself to this task. He wrote to the Governor-General on the 21st April, 1803:

"Matters in general have a good appearance. I think they will end as you wish. The combined chiefs, of whom we have heard so much, have allowed us to come quietly, and take our station at this place; and notwithstanding their threats, have taken not one step to impede our march, or to divert our attention to other objects. Here we are now in force, in a position from which nothing can drive us, and in which we shall gain strength daily. On the other hand, they have not yet made peace among themselves; much less have they agreed to attack, or in any particular plan of attack."

Then General Wellesley sounded the note of the coming Maratha War. He wrote:

"If I should be mistaken, and that in opposition to the conclusions of reasoning upon the state of our affairs with each of the Mahratta chiefs, who, we are told, were to combine to attack us; and, upon a comparison of our means of annoying each and all of them, with theirs of annoying the Nizam (which is all that they can do), we should still have a war with them, you will have the satisfaction of reflecting, that in consequence of the course of measures which you have already pursued, you have removed the seat of war to a distance from the Company's territories; and that you have the means of carrying it on in such a state of preparation, as to insure its speedy and successful termination."

"In thus reasoning upon the subject, I conclude that we should have had to contend with this confederacy at all events, or at least that we should have had a war with the Mahratta powers, in some shape, even if this treaty with the Peishwah had not been concluded."

So there can be no doubt, that all the preparations to restore Baji Rao to the Peshwa's *masnad* were meant for the war which the Governor-General had in contemplation with the Maratha powers. This matter will be again referred to, when we come to discuss the causes which led to the Second Maratha War.

General Wellesley established 'an order of things' in Puna which was 'favorable to the return of the Peshwa.' In the official records it is stated that

"arrangements were made by the Governor of Bombay, and by Lieut. Colonel Close, for the march of the Peishwah towards Poonah. A detachment, consisting of his Majesty's 78th regiment, (which left Bengal on the 7th of February, and arrived at Bombay on the 5th of April, 1803,) five companies of his Majesty's 84th regiment, a proportion of artillery, and 1035 Sepoys, in all 2205 men, was formed, and placed under the command of Colonel Murray, of his Majesty's 84th regiment, as an escort to His Highness, who left Bassein, attended by Colonel Close, on the 27th of April.

"On the 7th of May the Peshwa passed General Wellesley's camp at Panowullah, near Poonah. On the 13th His Highness, attended by his brother Chimnajee Appah and by a numerous train of the principal chiefs of the Mahratta Empire, proceeded towards the city of Poonah, and having entered his palace, resumed his seat upon the musnad, and received presents from his principal servants."*

Thus was the restoration of Baji Rao accomplished. This restoration compares most unfavorably with that of Charles II of England. Baji Rao did not receive that ovation from his subjects which the exiled monarch of England had. In describing the restoration of the Peshwa, no historian will use the language of Macaulay regarding that of Charles II. Macaulay wrote that, "if we were to choose a lot from amidst the multitude of those which men have drawn since the beginning of the world, we would choose that of Charles II on the day of his return."

Baji Rao's restoration was an ignominious and disgraceful affair. It was everything which that of Charles II was not.

* Wellington *Despatches*, I, p. 158.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SECOND MARATHA WAR—ITS GENESIS AND ALLEGED CAUSES

When the disgraceful act of the restoration of the Peshwa was played out, the principal actors on the scene did not leave the stage and let the curtain drop. One should have thought that the objects for which so much trouble had been taken by the Governor-General and his brother had been accomplished by depriving the Peshwa of his independence, placing British troops in his dominions, restoring him to the *masnad* at Puna and finally making him a subsidiary ally to the British. But the latter entertained designs too deep and cunning to be easily divined by simple Asiatics. They did not consider their task done by ensnaring the Peshwa. They did everything in their power to provoke the Marathas to war. But when the Maratha powers did not declare war upon the English, the latter attacked them.

This Second Maratha War forms one of the blackest chapters in the history of British India. It was a war in which the Britishers were the aggressors and its consequences were fatal to the independence of the Indian States. What were the causes which brought about this war ? In tracing the causes, we shall find that the Maratha Powers did *not* give any offence to the British to lead them to declare war upon them.

It has been said that Jeswunt Rao Holkar had attacked the troops of Sindhia as well as those of the Peshwa at Puna and had defeated them. After the restoration of the Peshwa, one would have expected that the English would have pursued and punished Holkar for the manner in which he had ill-treated their protege and ally, the Peshwa. But the British did nothing of the sort. That Maratha chieftain was not content with plundering the Peshwa's territories, but invaded the dominions of the ally of the East India Company—the Nizam. After leaving Puna, Holkar made his appearance in the Nizam's territories, on which he levied contributions. Even this conduct of Holkar did not move the English to punish him. Dating his letter from Puna, 13th May, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hydarabad:—

"I have the honor to enclose the copy of a letter which I have received from Jeshwunt Rao Holkar, in answer to one which I wrote to him upon the subject of his conduct at Aurangabad.

"It is reported here that Holkar was invited to plunder Aurangabad by the Nizam's sirdar in charge of that city. From your knowledge of the character of this sirdar and of his connexions, you will be able to form a judgment of the probable truth of this report."

There was no note of punishing Holkar sounded in the above. General Wellesley not only gave credit to a report (which appears to be a fabrication of his brain), but to exonerate Holkar for his conduct, he wrote on the 27th May, 1803, to his brother, the Governor-General:

"You will have seen Holkar's letter to me upon the subject of the plunder of Aurangabad. If matters are brought to a peacable conclusion with Sindhia and Holkar goes off to Hindustan, towards which quarter he is now moving, in my opinion, it will be most proper to take no further notice

of the contribution levied upon Aurangabad ; *at least not to go to war to force Holkar to pay it back again.*"

From the words put in italics in the above extract it will be evident that the English had no intention to punish Holkar. He had been made their cat's paw and he had played into their hands and served them remarkably well in creating distractions in the Maharashtra and thus helped them in ensnaring the Peshwa.

The British still affected that Holkar was their friend. For, General Wellesley wrote on the 16th July, 1803, to Jeswunt Rao Holkar:

> "Much time has elapsed since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you, although I am anxious to cultivate the good understanding which has subsisted between the Honorable Company's Government and you."

Good understanding indeed, when Holkar could expel the Peshwa from Puna and levy contributions on the territories of the ally of the Honorable Company's Government, the Nizam !

After the defeat of his troops by Holkar, Dowlat Rao Sindhia tried to retrieve the disaster. But his situation was a very pitiable one. The English had created distractions in his dominions and fomented dissensions amongst his domestics and relations. Notwithstanding all these discouragements, it speaks very highly of the statesmanship of Sindhia that he thoroughly grasped his critical situation and tried to improve it. He asked the Raja of Berar to join him and with this combination, he hoped he would be able to bring the Holkar to his senses and snatch the imbecile Peshwa from the pythonic embrace of the English.

With these intentions, he set out from his capital towards the Deccan. It does not appear that he ever contemplated a contest with the English. He had his grievances against them. He had not been consulted and had no hand in framing the Treaty of Bassein. The manner in which they concluded that treaty with the Peshwa, was not one calculated to cultivate good understanding between the Honorable Company and the independent Maratha Powers. This treaty deliberately ignored and insulted Sindhia.

The opinion of Dowlat Rao Sindhia should have been taken before the English induced the imbecile Peshwa to conclude the treaty of Bassein with them. Sindhia should have been consulted, for he was the proper authority as to the necessity or otherwise of a new treaty with the Peshwa. The fact should not be lost sight of that the treaty which governed the relations between the Maratha Powers and the English was that of Salbye, which had been ratified during the administration of Warren Hastings. The English would have fared very badly, and perhaps their administration in India would have been swept away altogether, had the treaty of Salbye not been concluded with the Marathas. That treaty would never have been an accomplished fact, but for the mediation of Mahadji Sindhia and the Regent of Berar of that day.

The successors of those who had been 'converted into a friend' and 'employed as the instrument of peace' had likewise hoped the Treaty of Salbye would guarantee 'everlasting peace' between the Marathas and the English. A sense of gratitude and honour should have dictated the latter to consult the successors of those who had contributed to

the accomplishment of the Treaty of Salbye before cancelling that Treaty and replacing it by that of Bassein. But the English of those days in India lacked all fine sensibilities of gratitude, honour and honesty; for them wrong-doing had no limits save those imposed by expediency and personal needs. They looked upon a remorseless conscience, cunning and wrong-doing as the means adapted to reach their desired end.

As said before, there is no evidence that Dowlat Rao Sindhia meditated war upon the English. Even if he did so, he should not be blamed, for he had well-founded grievances against them. It was he who had raised Baji Rao to the Peshwa's *masnad,* and naturally he could not sit idle when he saw the manner in which the Peshwa was being ensnared by the English. Sindhia was not consulted as to the new treaty of Bassein, and it also appears that he had not been made acquainted with the contents of that treaty before, or even a long time after, the restoration of Baji Rao to the Peshwa's *masnad.*

Dowlat Rao Sindhia was smarting under these grievances. To make the situation worse and to provoke him to hostilities, the Governor-General had ordered troops to assemble on the frontiers of all the Maratha States.

But this menacing aspect of the British troops did not lead the Marathas to declare hostilities. We cannot too highly admire the patience and accomplished statesmanship which Dowlat Rao Sindhia exhibited at this critical hour. But after all, he was a simple Asiatic and was unable to cope with the treachery of the perfidious and faithless representatives of the East India Company.

None of the Maratha Powers had in contemplation hostilities against the English. The Governor-General's brother, General Wellesley, was also of the same opinion. On the 3rd May, 1803, he wrote to General Stuart:

"It is my opinion that it is by no means certain that Scindhia will advance to Poona, and it is most probable that the report of his intended march has been circulated for the purpose of intimidating us, or the Nizam."

Thus it is evident that there was no pobability of Sindhia's entertaining hostile designs against the British. But what was the explanation, then, of Sindhia's having crossed the Narbuda and marching towards the Deccan? There are two explanations of Sindhia's movements and these have been furnished by the British themselves. One was that Sindhia tried to unite the Maratha Powers in a confederacy as a defensive measure against the menacing attitude assumed by the British on the frontier of every Maratha State. The Marquess Wellesley wrote to the Secret Committee of the East India Company on the 19th April, 1803:

"Nor is the sincerity of Scindhia's declaration incompatible with the project of a confederacy between Scindhia, Holkar, and the Rajah of Berar for purposes of a defensive nature, which I consider to be the extreme object of Scindhia, in negotiating such a confederacy, without any views whatever of hostility towards the British power."

Dating his letter from Puna, 15th May, 1803, Colonel Close wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors:

"Although Scindhia gave Colonel Collins the most positive assurances, that he was determined not to interfere in the arrangements lately concluded between the Honorable Company and the Peishwa,

his conduct has since been unsteady and equivocal. On the 4th instant he marched from Burhaunpur with the declared intention of proceeding to Poona by way of Badowly, a town about fifty coss to the westward of Burhaunpur, and the place where, it is said, the concerted meeting of the three chieftains is to take place.......

"Whether the proposed meeting at Badowly will ever take place, or if it do happen, what may be the result, it must still be difficult to determine. The restoration of the Peishwa; the powerful support afforded to his Government by the British forces, joined by so many of the jaghirdars and sirdars subordinate to the Poona state; added to the cement which the alliance must daily acquire, are circumstances which may influence strongly the deliberations of the apprehended confederacy, and press upon the members of it the expediency, if they do form a league, of making it only defensive. In every event, the approaching season is unfavourable for active operations. The rivers that rise from the western ghauts will soon fill; crossing them, to the native armies, will be dangerous, if not impracticable, but safe and easy to the British forces.

"Should the apprehended confederacy, therefore, attempt to invade the Nizam's or the Poonah territories during the approaching monsoon, their operations must be liable to great disadvantages.

"*That Scindhia should join the confederacy for hostile purposes is certainly impossible.* He is supposed to be secretly averse to an accommodation with Holkar; and to engage in a Southern invasion in the full prospect of meeting with the most formidable opposition, and leave his northern possessions exposed to an attack at so great a distance from his court, would appear to be a state of things which such a mind as Scindhia's would carefully avoid."

This is one explanation of Sindhia's marching towards the Deccan. It was his intention to form a confederacy for defensive purposes. In this, the Britishers did not see any harm; at least, they did not express any disapprobation of Sindhia's conduct.

The other explanation of Sindhia's movement towards the Deccan is to be found in the fact that the Peshwa desired him to come to Puna. For this purpose, the Peshwa had deputed an agent to the Court of Sindhia. The Governor-General had previously expressed his opinion, that if the Peshwa desired to withdraw from the engagements of the Treaty of Bassein, he would not compel him to adhere to the faith of those engagements. On the 10th February, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors:

"The knowledge of our arrangements with the Peishwa may induce Doulut Row Scindhia and Holkar, to compromise their differences and to offer to the Peishwa proposals for restoring His Highness to the Musnad of Poona, which His Highness may be disposed to accept, notwithstanding the actual conclusion of engagements for that purpose with the British Government. In such an event it is not my intention to attempt to compel the Peishwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at he hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Mahratta States."

The Peshwa had never been given any opportunity to dissociate himself from the Britishers. On his restoration, he found the yoke which they had placed on his neck very galling. He had changed King Log for King Stork and had jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. In a weak moment, he had courted their alliance and was now repenting of having done so. It was natural for him, therefore, to try to withdraw from the engagements contracted with them. For this purpose, he wanted the advice of his former friend, Dowlat Rao Sindhia, and so he desired him to come to Puna. It was well known to the Britishers that Sindhia had been invited to Puna by the Peshwa. They tried to prevent Sindhia from coming to Puna and having an interview with the Peshwa. Major-General Wellesley wrote on the 10th May, 1803, to General Stuart:

"Colonel Collins intends to press the Peishwa to desire Scindhia not to advance to Poona ; and I think that I ought to write him a letter to say that such is the Peishwa's wish, and that it is proper it should be complied with."

General Wellesley knew that that was a lie, that it was his wish and not that of the Peshwa, for the latter had not yet returned to Puna. That this was not true is proved by the General writing in the next sentence :

"Before I determine upon this point, however, I shall see what the Peishwa will write."

It would seem that long before his return to Puna, the Peshwa had sent an agent to Dowlat Rao Sindhia, inviting him to come to Puna. Writing to the Secret Committee of Directors on the 19th April, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley said :

"Scindhia plainly declared to Colonel Collins, that, until the communications of the agent despatched to his Court, by His Highness the Peishwa, (for the purpose of explaining the nature and extent of the engagements concluded between His Highness, and the British Government) should be received, Scindhia could not return a decided answer to the propositions which had been stated to him on the part of the British Government, with regard to his accession to the treaty of Bassein as a contracting party."

Had the Governor-General kept his faith, he would have released the Peshwa from the thraldom under which he had placed him, as soon as he discovered that the Peshwa had no mind to adhere to the term imposed upon him by the Treaty of Bassein. But this was not what he and his compatriots in India wanted. Notwithstanding his positive assurance to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors that he would not "compel the Peishwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Maratha States", he and his brother and the other British officials did everything in their power to force a war on the Marathas.

The part played by Colonel Collins in bringing about the war, requires special mention. Colonel Collins was Resident at the Court of Sindhia. He was one of those diplomatists whom the Marquess Wellesley had taken into his confidence, and with whose help he wove the threads of his dark policy all over India, which he filled with intrigues and wars. Colonel Collins had not proved so successful a diplomatist as the Resident at Puna, Colonel Barry Close. The star of the latter was in the ascendant, for he had, after all, succeeded in depriving the Peshwa of his independence. Colonel Collins, on the other hand, had been at the job, that is, forcing the scheme of subsidiary alliance on Sindhia for nearly four years, but without success. It would seem that he was smarting at his failure. It is on this hypothesis only, that we are able to account for his hostility to Sindhia and his determination to ruin that Maratha Prince.

Of course, it was mere hypocrisy on the part of the Governor-General to have assured the Secret Committee that he would do nothing which might result in "involving the Company in a war with the combined Maratha States." The truth is that, almost ever since his arrival in India, he had been plotting to ruin Dowlat Rao Sindhia. He never concealed this. In his 'private and secret' letter dated Fort St. George, 8th March, 1799, to Lieut.-General Sir Alured Clarke, the then Commander-in-Chief in India, the Governor-General wrote :

"I am equally satisfied of the policy of reducing the power of Scindhia, whenever the opportunity shall appear advantageous."

He had let loose the hell of intrigues to effect this.

But preparations were not quite complete when Colonel Collins was about to precipitate the Company into a contest with Sindhia. The "advantageous opportunity" had not yet arrived. They were yet trying to make the world believe that they had no intention of going to war with him. At first they were labouring to show that Sindhia had no hostile designs against the Company. At such a moment, therefore, the conduct of Colonel Collins placed them in a false position. Colonel Collins, of course, longed for the war. His task had been done. He had performed everything with which he had been charged. He had fomented domestic dissensions in Sindhia's household and also raised enemies against that Maratha Prince. He had corrupted Sindhia's army and had conspired with some of his commanders and officers. If he failed in imposing the yoke of the subsidiary alliance on the neck of that prince, he had the satisfaction of knowing that in a contest with the British forces, Sindhia would be utterly crushed. He was therefore anxious to hasten the war.

As said before, this conduct of Colonel Collins in precipitating the war did not commend itself to the Governor-General and his brother, for the simple reason that all the necessary preparations had not been yet completed. So we find that Major-General Wellesley wrote on the 10th May, 1803, to General Stuart:

"I hope that Colonel Collins will have been induced to remain in Scindhia's Camp; I think that he was rather hasty in his determination to withdraw: and that, by withdrawing on the grounds of Scindhia's altering the direction of his march, he has done no good. Scindhia's ministers will still go on negotiating with Colonel Collins's native Agents, and they will persuade their Master that the absence of the Colonel from his camp is not a novel occurrence, and is not a sign of war. Thus we shall lose all the advantages of the check upon them of Colonel Collins's presence, and of his influence over Scindhia; and by the manner in which he has withdrawn, he has not given Scindhia any reason to fear the commencement of hostilites with the Company."

Colonel Collins was persuaded to remain with Sindhia so as not to "lose all the advantages of the check upon" Sindhia's people, which in non-diplomatic language means intriguing and conspiring with Sindhia's men. In the meantime General Wellesley went on making all the necessary preparations for the war. He knew that the best time for making war upon the Marathas was the rainy season. In his 'Memorandum upon operations in the Maratha territory,' General Wellesley wrote:

"The season at which it is most convenient to commence a campaign with the Marathas, is that at which rivers, which take their rise in the Western ghauts, fill. This happens generally in the month of June. . . .

"The reasons why I think that the most favorable season for operations against the Maratha nation, are as follow:

"First the Maratha army is principally composed of cavalry, and their plan of operations against a British army would be to endeavour to cut off its communication with its rear. . . . As the rivers are not fordable, as there are no bridges, and no means of passing them except by basket boats, which it is difficult, and might be rendered impossible to procure, the fulness of the rivers operates as a barrier. It is certain, that the enemy cannot pass them in large numbers, and it is probable that

they would not venture to throw across a small body, or rather, that they would not be able to prevail upon a small body to remain on a different side from the main body of the army.

"The inconvenience and delay which the British army experience in crossing the rivers by means of boats, when they are full, is trifling, and in fact they would experience no inconvenience or delay if good pontoons were provided, and a bridge were thrown across each river for the passage of the army. . . . Thus, then, we should enjoy all the advantage of a river not fordable, to shorten the line of our communication, which river our enemy could not pass with a large body of troops, and over which he would not dare to detach a small body; and we should have it in our power to pass it with much ease, and with as little inconvenience and delay, as we should experience if the river were fordable.

"Secondly, the Maratha country in general is but ill supplied with water. The rains which fill these rivers, although not heavy at the beginning of the rainy season, are sufficient to fill many nullahs; and an army has at this time some chance of being supplied with water, of which, in the dry season, it is certain it would never find much, and frequently none."

Thus, then, the British were not inclined to declare war upon Sindhia before the commencement of the rains. These were the reasons which prompted General Wellesley to induce Collins to stay with Sindhia and thus to lull his suspicions regarding the hostile designs of the English. General Wellesley was busily engaged in all his warlike preparations. On the 17th May, 1803, he wrote to General Stuart:

"When I saw a possibility that we might have to contend with this confederacy, I wrote to Mr. Duncan (Governor of Bombay) to request that he would supply us with a bridge of boats, respecting which I sent him a detailed memorandum. He has made but little progress in this work, which is most essential, (in this country so much intersected with rivers, none of which are fordable in the rains)." . . .

On the same date, he also wrote to Colonel (afterwards Sir Thomas) Munro:

"I learn from General Stuart, that he has desired you to supply me with twenty boats for the Malpoorba, and some boatmen.

"You know that the rivers will fill between the 14th and 20th of June; aud I beg you will take early measures for providing this mode of passing them."

At the time when the Company's representatives in India were making all these warlike preparations, they knew fully well that neither Sindhia nor any other Maratha State had the remotest intention of declaring hostilities against them.

But when all the preparations were complete, the Britishers tried to make out that they had been provoked to wage war by the conduct of Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. They changed their tone. On the 30th May, 1803, Mr. N. B. Edmonstone, Secretary to the Government of India, wrote to Colonel Close, Resident at Puna:

"It is scarcely possible that Scindhia should incur the hazard of hostilities with the British power, unless assured of the co-operation of the Rajah of Berar, and of Yeshwunt Rao Holkar, nor that Scindhia should proceed to Poona for hostile purposes, without being joined by the forces of one or both of those chieftains. Notwithstanding the repeated reports of the actual combination of those chieftains for purposes hostile to the British interests, His Excellency the Governor-General continues to discredit the truth of such rumors. Many of the circumstances related for the purpose of accrediting these rumors are manifest fabrications; and the object of the Marathas in circulating the report of the existence of a general confederacy of such a description, being evidently to intimidate the British Government and its allies, it is the duty of every British officer, civil and military, to employ his utmost efforts for the purpose of checking the dissemination of opinions calculated to

impair the interests of our country in India, to encourage our enemies, and to depress the spirits of our friends. The terror of the British name will preclude such combinations, if the confidence of our allies be not shaken by the manifest decline of our own fortitude and decision in the season of our utmost glory and power. A premature disposition on our part to credit the possibility of the supposed confederacy may create the evil of which it supposes the existence, and may animate the counsels of our secret enemies with a spirit of audacity and rashness, which may demand an effort of our superior strength. It is, therefore, the positive order of the Governor-General, that you use the most active exertions to discountenance the rumors (which have been so assiduously circulated,) of the existence of an hostile confederacy between Scindhia, Raghoji Bhonsla, and Holkar, against the British power.

Even if such a combination should take place, no danger can be apprehended from it to the British interests; indeed, it is not credible, that even with such a combination, the Maratha chiefs could venture to encounter the British power. His Excellency, however, adverting to every means of preventing such a conspiracy* or of restraining its operation, has addressed a remonstrance to the Rajah of Berar in terms corresponding with the representations which the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia has been instructed to make to Scindhia, and has directed the post of Midnapore to strengthen with a view to alarm the Rajah of Berar, for the safety of the province of Cuttack."

Thus the Company's servants went on making every preparation for the war, but with their consummate hypocrisy they pretended that their intentions were pacific. In the same letter from which extracts have been made above, the Governor-General wrote to Colonel Close:

"In the event of Scindhia's return to the northward of the Nerbuddah, it may still be necessary to retain the army in the field for the purpose of preventing Holkar's troops to Poona, and of enforcing the complete acknowledgment of the Peishwa's authority throughout his immediate possessions . . ."

which means that while the Britishers were trying to prevent Sindhia and the Raja of Berar from concentrating their troops within their own territories, they would themselves 'retain the army in the field' and thus threaten and provoke the other Maratha Powers to war.

It will also be observed that the Governor-General equally dreaded the aggressive conduct of Holkar. He was afraid that Holkar might return to Puna or 'prosecute his predatory operations within the Nizam's dominions.' But he never sounded a note of war against that Maratha Chieftain. If the Britishers should have declared hostilities upon anybody, it should have been Holkar. Justice and policy demanded that. The Peshwa asked them to do so. The Nizam would have been glad of this. The other members of the Maratha Confederacy, namely, Sindhia and the Raja of Berar, would have heartily co-operated with them in their war on Holkar. But the English were not prepared to chastise and punish Holkar.

It is evident that the Peshwa was not consulted when the British went to war with Sindhia. In his *Military Reminiscences* Colonel James Welsh writes:

"Very much in the dark with regard to Indian politics, we had naturally concluded, that as we came to succour the Peshwa, his friends would be our friends, and his foes our likeliest opponents: but here we reckoned without our host, for the man we were now to attack was not Holkar who had deposed him, but Sindhia who had upheld him, and actually suffered a defeat, near Poona, in his

* It was the British who were conspiring and not the Marathas.

cause ! Having never suffered my head with the intricacy of state affairs, I have, therefore, never learned the real cause of this War."*

Poor Colonel Welsh did not understand the crooked policy of the Christian Government he was then serving.

While in his letter to Dowlat Rao Sindhia, dated Fort William, June 3rd, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley threatened him with war, he declared his peaceful intentions towards Holkar. He wrote to Sindhia :

"The British Government is also willing to arbitrate any difference which may subsist between you and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, *with whom it is my wish to maintain peace.*"

Why should Sindhia have accepted the arbitration of the British, especially when they had neither prevented Holkar from invading his territories, nor assisted him against Holkar ?

Colonel Collins was still with Sindhia. He wanted to precipitate the British Government into war with Sindhia. He knew the weak points in the military organisation of that Maratha Prince and was, therefore, perfectly certain that a contest with him would result in a victory for his compatriots. It was this man to whose hands the Marquess Wellesley entrusted the negotiations. It was a foregone conclusion, therefore, that Colonel Collins would do everything in his power to bring about the war. To him, Mr. N. B. Edmonstone, Secretary to the Government of India, wrote on the 3rd June, 1803, a long letter, the purport of which was that Sindhia should give up all intentions of advancing towards Puna and return to his capital in Hindustan. It suited the purpose of the Governor-General to ignore the fact that the Peshwa had been under the protection of Sindhia and in fact raised to the Peshwa's *masnad* by him. Sindhia, therefore, had an interest in the Peshwa's affairs. When Baji Rao fled from Puna, Sindhia, in an evil hour, asked the British to co-operate with him to restore the Peshwa. This request of Sindhia was now twisted by the Governor-General to mean that Sindhia had no right to interfere in the Peshwa's affairs, since the latter had been restored to his *masnad* without his help. Mr. Edmonstone wrote to Colonel Collins :

"His (Scindhia's) exertions, however, have not contributed in any degree to the Peishwa's restoration. Aware of the doubtful issue of a further contest with the arms of Holkar, Scindhia solicited the co-operation of the British power, and continued in a state of inactivity at a considerable distance from the scene of action."

Poor Sindhia did not know the penalty he had to pay for soliciting the co-operation of the English in restoring the Peshwa. Of course, he thought that, as his predecessor had done them a good turn by being employed as the instrument of peace, when in all probability the foundation of their political power would have been uprooted but for the mediation of Mahadji Sindhia, the Britishers would, out of a sense of gratitude, comply with his request and co-operate in the restoration of the Peshwa. But had he known that it was through their machinations that he had been obliged to leave Puna and Holkar had been enabled to ravage his dominions, he would not have solicited their co-operation. The very fact of his soliciting their co-operation showed the interest he

* Vol. I, p. *155 et seq.*

had in the Peshwa's affairs. It seemed, therefore, preposterous to Sindhia that he should hold no communication with the Peshwa whom the Britishers had taken under their protection.

Moreover, the Peshwa invited Sindhia and the Raja of Berar to Puna. This is evident from the writings of the Governor-General, who had informed the Court of Directors that it was not his

"intention to attempt to compel the Peishwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Maratha States."

It has been pointed out before, that this was pure hypocrisy to lull the suspicions of the Directors regarding his evil designs. He was a perfect dissembler and double-faced man at this time brooding over new schemes by means of which he hoped to stir up a war. When he had arrived in India, he found all tranquil, and immediately began to make plots and create tumults and forced others to take arms. Had he been sincere in the intentions which he expressed to the Court of Directors, he would have given an opportunity to the Peshwa to express his opinion. But he perfectly knew the opinion of the Peshwa. He knew that the latter desired to be released from the galling yoke of the British. Mr. Edmonstone, Secretary, wrote to Colonel Collins on 3rd June, 1803 :

"It will be proper to apprize Scindhia that his proceeding to Poona under any pretext whatever, *excepting the express permission of His Highness the Peishwa approved by the British Government* will infallibly involve him in hostilites with the British power."

How is this to be reconciled with the "intention" so distinctly expressed to the Directors of the East India Company that he (the Marquess Wellesley) would not compel the Peshwa "to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war" ?

The Governor-General also knew that the Raja of Berar had been solicited by the Peshwa to help him and also invited to Puna. Some time in March 1803, the Raja wrote a letter to the Prime Minister of His Highness the Nizam, which that sycophant and time-serving minister thought good policy to communicate to the Resident at Hyderabad on May 4th, 1803. There was nothing in this letter hostile to the interests of the Company in India. The letter proves that the Raja of Berar had been invited to Puna by the Peshwa and further shows that the latter solicited the co-operation of the Maratha Chieftains to restore him to his *masnad* at Puna. The Maratha Chieftains were ready to respond to his appeal. In this letter, the Raja of Berar wrote :

"At this time on the 18th of Zekaud (March 15th) the aforesaid ministers arrived in safety at Nagpore, and they were accompanied by Narrain Rao Beyd on the part of Rao Pundit Purdhaun Baji Rao, and by Wunkut Rao, the vakeel of Jeshwunt Rao Holkar, who reached this place on the same day. On the 25th of the same month also (March 20th) Idoo Rao Bashker, the plenipotentiary minister of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, arrived and had an interview with me; and in our public and private meetings they have repeatedly observed, in enumerating the circumstances which were entrusted to their verbal communication, that the causes of their mutual enmity and difference are perfectly evident and do not require a particular detail. That by the grace of God, their respective masters regard me as venerable and illustrious as their parents ; and that they conceive me to be wise and thoroughly informed on all matters, and on all occasions ; and as united

in the prosperity and adversity of the state of Rao Pundit Purdhaun. Adverting to which, they never would depart from that line of policy and counsel which I might desire for the removal and eradication of their mutual enmity and dissatisfaction, and for the establishment of a plan for the adjustment of the state and government of Rao Pundit Purdhaun.

"In a similar manner also, my ministers Shreedhur Pundit and Kishen Rao Chitnavis have represented to me the secrets of the mind of Yeshwant Rao Holkar, in consequence of which, after ascertaining their objects and intentions, and having adjusted a plan for the union of Scindhia and Holkar, I deputed Yeshwant Rao Ramchunder and Wunkut Rao, the vakeel to Holkar; and in compliance with the earnest solicitation and desire of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, and the urgent entreaties of Judhoo Rao Bashker, entering my tents has been settled for the 23rd of Zehedge (16th April).

"After a meeting shall have taken place, and an arrangement for the reconciliation and union between Scindhia and Holkar have been effected, a specific plan for the adjustment of the state and government of Rao Pundit Purdhaun, such as the honor and integrity of the Raja indispensably calls for, and is calculated for the prosperity of the country and cities, and the happiness of mankind at large, shall, with a due attention to the complexion of the times, be maturely devised and executed."

It will be observed that long before the return of the Peshwa to Puna, he had written and sent an agent to the Raja of Berar, as well as one to Dowlat Rao Sindhia, appealing to them to restore him to his *masnad* at Puna. These chiefs responded to his appeal and were proceeding to Puna. With these facts before him, the Governor-General, had he been true to his word, should have released the Peshwa. But his 'intention' expressed to the Court of Directors, and so often quoted above, was merely hypocrisy to blind the Directors as to his evil designs. He knew that the people of England were against waging wars on Indian sovereigns and princes and it was therefore that he wrote that he had no

"intention to attempt to compel the Peishwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Mahratta states."

Mill truly observes :

"Aware of the great unpopularity in England to which wars in India, except wars against Tippoo Sahib, were exposed; aware also of the vast load of debt which his administration had heaped upon the Government of India, a load which a new and extensive war must greatly augment, the Governor-General has, in various documents, presented a labored argument to prove, that the appeal to arms now made by the Brirish Government was forced, and altogether unavoidable."*

Here then, we come to know the reasons which induced the Governor-General to play the hypocrite and willingly mislead the Directors as to his real intentions. He wrote both to Dowlat Rao Sindhia and the Raja of Berar not to proceed to Puna. He threatened them with hostilities and invading their territories, if they did not comply with his request or rather order. But while he was meditating war and making every preparation for it he wrote to the Court of Directors, on the 20th June, 1803 :

"Any opposition from the Mahratta chieftains to the complete accomplishment of the stipulations of the treaty of Bassein, appears to be improbable, and I entertain a firm hope that the British Government will be speedily relieved from the danger which menaced our possessions in the Peninsula during the recent commotion in the Mahratta Empire, and that tranquillity will be

* Vol. VI., p. 306.

permanently established on our frontier by the operation of the alliance happily concluded with His Highness the Peishwa."

At the time when he was thus assuring the Court of Directors that the Treaty of Bassein would produce peace instead of war, it is probable that he had received from Colonel Collins, Resident with Sindhia, the letter dated the 29th May, 1803. In that letter, Colonel Collins represented or rather misrepresented the arrogant (?) conduct of Sindhia, with the result that the Governor-General declared that the war was inevitable. But knowing this, the Governor-General was dishonest in assuring the Court of Directors that there would be no war. As already mentioned before, Colonel Collins had all along tried his best to bring about a rupture with the Marathas. He was not the man who would heal up differences and maintain peace. A few extracts from this letter would suffice to show the frame of his mind.

"As Dowlut Rao Scindhia did not instantly speak, Unna Bhasker (Scindhia's minister) took upon himself to say in reply, that his master had no intention whatever to invade the territory of His Highness the Peishwa or the Nabob Nizam, adding, that when Holkar was levying contributions on the city of Aurungabad, the Maharaja had desired that chief to desist from further exactions, and to retire from the Nizam's frontier. I said that I was highly gratified by these assurances, and observed that it only now remained for the Maharaja to declare that the negotiations between this Durbar, the Berar Raja and Holkar, were not entered into with any view to obstruct the completion of the treaty of Bassein.

"Unna Bhasker then plainly told me, that Scindhia could afford me no satisfaction on this point until he had conferred with the Berar Raja. I instantly replied, that the proposed interview between those chiefs was of itself a sufficient cause to excite the suspicions of our government, inasmuch as the present tranquil state of affairs in the Deccan did not require the adoption of a measure, seldom resorted to but for hostile purposes. . . ."

"When I had done speaking, Unna Bhasker positively affirmed that His Highness the Peishwa, since his return to his capital, had repeatedly written to the Maharaja, and to the Berar Raja, desiring both those chiefs to repair to Poona. I expressed much surprise at this information, having, as I told Unna Bhaskar, understood from Colonel Close that His Highness Baji Rao had requested Dowlut Rao Scindhia not to advance to that city. Here the Maharaja solemnly assured me that he and the Bhonslah had actually received the invitations mentioned by Unna Bhasker, and this prince further asserted that the Peishwa had never written to him, prohibiting his approach to Poona. To this assertion I only said that no doubt a letter to that effect from His Highness would soon arrive here. Then reverting to the required explanation, I conjured Scindhia in language both urgent and conciliatory, to remove all my doubts and suspicions by an immediate and candid avowal of his intentions.

"Dowlut Rao in reply to those instances on my part said that he could not at present afford me the satisfaction I demanded without a violation of the faith which he had pledged to the Raja of Berar. He (Scindhia) then observed, that the Bhonsla was distant no more than forty coss from hence, and would probably arrive here in the course of a few days; that, immediately after his interview with that Raja I should be informed whether it would be peace or war. These words he delivered with much seeming composure. I then asked him whether I must consider this declaration as final on his part, which question was answered in the affirmative by the ministers of Dowlut Rao Scindhia. Here the conference, which lasted three hours, ended, and I soon after took a respectful leave of the Maharaja. Neither Scindhia, nor his ministers, made any remarsks on the treaty of Bassein, nor did they request a copy of it.

"If it be true, that His Highness the Peishwa, has really invited Dowlut Rao Scindhia to repair to Poona, of which fact the Maharaja assured me he had undeniable proofs under the seal of Baji Rao, Scindhia may possibly march to that capital, and allege that this measure was sanctioned by the orders of the head of the Mahratta Empire. I therefore sincerely hope that His Highness the Peishwa has not delayed to forward a letter to the Maharaja, prohibiting his advance to Poona."

As this letter produced the most lamentable war in India, it demands more than ordinary attention on the part of every writer on Indian history. How far Collins, who, as has been so often mentioned before, was prejudiced against Sindhia, correctly and truly reported the purport of the interview to the Governor-General, it is impossible to say. It should also be remembered that the medium of conversation was not English; neither Sindhia nor his ministers knew that language. Collins, on the other hand, was not proficient in the languages of the East. Most of the conversation had to be carried on through the medium of an interpreter. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to say how far each party understood the meaning and intentions of the other. But presuming that Collins correctly understood Sindhia and his ministers, and truly reported everything that occurred in that interview to the Governor-General, this letter of Colonel Collins does not warrant any man, not blinded by prejudice and passions to agree with the Marquess Wellesley, to declare,

"Scindhia's language to Colonel Collins, however, has been insulting and hostile, and amounts to a positive act of aggression upon every received principle of the law of nations.*

From Collins' letter, it appears that the language of that gallant Christian officer to Sindhia was 'insulting and hostile,' and not that of the Maratha Prince. The Governor-General considered Sindhia's expression 'whether it would be peace or war,' as 'insulting and hostile.' But from the context of the letter, one is not justified to think so. The resident was pressing Sindhia to express his intention regarding the proposed conference with the Raja of Berar. Sindhia again and again answered that he was unable to give any satisfactory reply until the meeting with the Bhonsle would take place. But this did not satisfy the gallant Colonel. He pressed Sindhia for an immediate answer. Supposing Sindhia used the expression 'whether it would be peace or war,'—words which Collins has put in his mouth, this expression is neither 'insulting' nor 'hostile' nor amounts to a 'positive act of aggression upon every received principle of the law of nations.' The Governor-General is very fond of appealing to 'every received principle of the law of nations.' But it was convenient for him to forget that his conduct 'was a positive act of aggression upon every received principle of the law of nations.' He had assembled troops on the frontiers of every Maratha State without any provocation or cause. Under such circumstances Sindhia's expression, (presuming it was genuine and not fabricated by Collins) was neither 'insulting' nor 'hostile.'

It would further appear from Colonel Collins' letter that Sindhia had not fully understood the significance of the different articles of the Treaty of Bassein. The Raja

* The Marquess Welesley's most secret and confidental letter to His Excellency Lieut-General Lake, dated Fort William, June 28th, 1803.

of Berar also was in the same situation. Their proposed meeting was mainly intended to discuss the Treaty and its provisions and then to decide what should be done. In this, they were acting quite within their legitimate province, and 'every received principle of the law of nations' did not authorize the British to prevent independent sovereigns and princes from meeting and discussing measures best calculated to secure their welfare and defence. The Maratha princes had not been fully acquainted with the provisions of the Treaty of Bassein and they also seem to have been alarmed at some of its articles. In his letter to the Marquess Wellesley received on the 31st July, 1803, Dowlat Rao Sindhia wrote :

"I have received your Lordship's friendly letter notifying the conclusion of new engagements between His Highness the Peishwa and the English Company at Bassein, together with a copy of the treaty ; and I have been fully apprized of its contents, which have also been fully communicated to me by Colonel Collins.

"Whereas the engagements subsisting between the Peishwa and me are such, that the adjustment of all affairs and of the concerns of his state and government, should be arranged and completed with my advice and participation, by the favor of God ! through a regard to what is above stated, the degrees of mutual concord have so increased, that to this time no interruption or derangement of them has occurred on either side. Notwithstanding this, the engagements which have lately been concluded between that quarter (British Government) and the Peishwa have only now been communicated, and on the part of the Peishwa, to this time of writing, *nothing*. Therefore, it has now been determined with Raja Ragoojee Bhonsla, in presence of Colonel Collins, that confidential persons on my part and the Raja's, be despatched to the Peishwa, for the purpose of ascertaining the circumstances of the (said) engagements. At the same time no intention whatever is entertained on any part to subvert the stipulations of the treaty consisting of nineteen articles, which has been concluded at Bassein, between the British Government and the Peishwa, *on condition that there be no design whatever on the part of the English Company and the Peishwa to subvert the stipulations of the treaty, which, since a long period of time, has been concluded between the Peishwa's Sircar, me, and the said Raja and the Mahratta chiefs.*"

From the words put in italics in the above it is certain that Collins did not fully represent the views of Dowlat Rao Sindhia to the Governor-General. The Marquess Wellesley never condescended to take any notice of, or reply to, the above letter of Dowlat Rao Sindhia.

That the Maratha Confederates had not been unnecessarily alarmed at the Treaty of Bassein, would also appear from the fact that the Secret Committee of the East India Company condemned that Treaty on the ground of its involving the Company in a war with the Marathas. In their despatch dated London, 6th March, 1804, to the Governor-General in Council, the Secret Committee wrote :

"As it was always our wish to avoid a connection with the Mahrattas at the expense or even at the serious risk of a war with any of the leading members of that confederacy, we deeply regret that such has been the result of the treaty concluded with the Peishwa at Bassein and we feel it necessary in consequence thereof at this early period, to convey to you our sentiments upon the present posture of affairs.

* * * * * * *

"The most prominent grounds of jealousy entertained by the Mahratta states of the late treaty, appear to arise out of the third and seventeenth articles, the former introducing and permanently stationing a commanding British force in the Peishwa's dominions, the latter binding His Highness without

the stipulations being reciprocal, not to commence any negotiation with any other power without previous communication with the British Government, which two stipulations they consider as tending to place under our control and guidance the legitimate head of their Empire.

* * * * * * *

"We are therefore desirous, whilst the support to which His Highness is entitled under the treaty of Bassein (so long as he shall remain faithful to his engagements), is afforded to him in the fullest manner, that we should not hesitate to relax in such stipulations as were introduced into that treaty rather for our, than for His Highness's accommodation. When we refer to the Peishwa's former reluctance to the introduction of a subsidiary force within his dominions, and we couple this with the decided repugnance which undoubtedly exists to the arrangement latetly concluded, on the part of the other states, we cannot doubt that a relaxation of this condition of the treaty will prove highly satisfactory to his Highness, and we also flatter ourselves that by this relaxation a material objection in the feelings of the other states may be removed."

It seems that the letter which the Marquess Wellesley received on the 31st July, 1803 from Dowlat Rao Sindhia and which has been inserted above, was not communicated to the Secret Committee by the Governor-General. Had he done so, the Secret Committee would not have written the following sentences condemning Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. The Secret Committee wrote :

"Whilst we are ready to admit, that states jealous of their independency might naturally entertain some alarm at stipulations capable of being represented to them as placing the head of the empire under the immediate control of a foreign power, we cannot avoid noticing the deceitful and disingenuous conduct pursued by Scindhia and the Raja of Berar previous to the rupture. Instead of openly avowing their sentiments and endeavouring by amicable explanation to obtain relief from any stipulations of the treaty which could be supposed to affect their interests, they in terms disclaimed any ground of objection, and disavowed any intention of obstructing this connection."

From the letter of Dowlat Rao Sindhia received on the 31st July, 1803 by the Marquess Wellesley, it is evident from the sentences put in italics that that Maratha prince expressed his dissatisfaction at the Treaty of Bassein ; neither Dowlat Rao nor the Raja of Berar ever 'in terms disclaimed any ground of objection.' It was the interest of the British to misrepresent the views of the Maratha confederates and suppress facts and documents which were not convenient for carrying out their nefarious plans and schemes. In ignorance of all the facts of the case the Secret Committee wrote the above sentences charging Sindhia and the Raja of Berar with 'deceitful and disingenuous conduct.' These Maratha princes were 'endeavouring by amicable explanation to obtain relief,' and for this very purpose, they met and were holding counsels, but the Company's representatives peremptorily told them to separate from one another. It was they who provoked and precipitated the war and not the Maratha princes.

The Secret Committee even ordered the restoration of the conquered territories to the Maratha confederates. They wrote :

"Upon the whole our wish is that a modification of the treaty should at all events take place in conformity to the above instructions, not on the ground of concession but upon a deliberate consideration of the system of policy which appears to us to be the best-adapted to the genius *and the character of the people, ... We see no adequate motive for continuing the war, and* should the success of our arms be such as under all the circumstances appear to you in prudence to warrant a demand of some concessions from our opponents, we desire that the demand be framed

upon principles of great moderation and with a view to the improvement of the military security rather than the extension, of our present dominions.

"We must however impress most strongly on your minds that the early termination of the war is the object to which we desire your efforts may be most earnestly directed, and although we have thought it right to advert to the possible expediency of requiring certain sacrifices in the nature of reparation from our opponents, you are by no means to consider such suggestions as controlling your conduct in case you should be of opinion under all the circumstances that peace is likely to be more firmly established and future causes of dissension more effectually obviated by an entire restoration of all our conquests."

Of course, the Company's Secretary in India did not give effect to the recommendations of the Secret Committee.

The Governor-General was very profuse in his assurances to Sindhia and the Bhonsle that the Treaty of Bassein had not interfered with their independence and just rights and privileges, nay, even went so far as to tell them that that Treaty provided 'for the safety of the several branches of the Maratha Empire.' While he was thus assuring them that the Treaty of Bassein would do them no harm, he was, at the same time, repeating them his offer of subsidiary alliance. But he knew that he was playing the hypocrite, for his assurances to them were false, 'for by his own showing the Treaty of Bassein concluded with the Peshwa was not calculated to provide 'for the safety of the several branches of the Maratha Empire.' At the time when he was trying his best to ensnare any one of the Maratha Powers, he did not conceal his view, that by succeeding to ensnare one, others also would be drawn into the meshes of his scheme of the subsidiary alliance. For, he wrote, that

"It may reasonably be expected, that the success of a negotiation, for that purpose, with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, will materially promote the complete accomplishment of His Excellency's views, by inducing the other Mahratta powers to concur in the proposed arrangement, with a view to avoid the *dependent and subordinate condition to which they must be reduced, by their exclusion from an alliance, of which the operation with respect to them, must be, to control all ambitious views and aggressive designs on their part,* without affording to those powers the benefits of the general guarantee."

Regarding this, Mill truly observes:

"The doctrine of the Governor-General, therefore, was, that, in this manner, everyone of the Mahratta states would become dependent upon the English Government; those who accepted the alliance, by the alliance; those who did not accept it, by being deprived of it; the same happy effect, in two opposite cases, by the same ingenious combination of means."*

So it was simple hypocrisy and dishonesty on the part of the Governor-General to assure the Bhonsle and Sindhia that the Treaty of Bassein would provide for their safety, and secure their independence. The Maratha princes knew the full meaning of the diplomatic language of the British. The Treaty of Bassein threatened their independence. This has been expressed by no one in a more explicit manner, than by the Marquess Wellesley's chief counseller, the Hon'ble Mr. (afterwards Sir George Hilaro) Barlow, who wrote:

"The restoration of the head of the Mahratta Empire to his government through the influence of

* Vol. VI., pp. 270-271.

the British power, in fact, has placed all the remaining states of India in this dependent relation to the British Government. If the alliance with the Peishwa is maintained, its natural and necessary operations would in the course of time reduce Scindhia . . , . and the Raja of Berar, to a state of dependence upon the Peishwa, and consequently upon the British power, even if they had acquiesced in the treaty of Bassein."*

The same train of arguments led the Maratha princes to the same conclusion. So if any one was guilty of "a positive act of aggression upon every received principle of the law of nations," it was not Dowlat Rao Sindhia but the Governor-General, for his ensnaring the Peshwa and indirectly trying to bring the other Maratha States within the meshes of his abominable scheme.

Every 'principle of the law of nations' demanded that the British should punish their own ally the Peshwa for his inviting Sindhia and the Raja of Berar to Puna. There can be no doubt that the Peshwa invited them. Collins' letter to the Governor-General mentions it. The despatches of General Wellesley bear testimony to it. The latter wrote to General Stuart on the 4th June, 1803:

"Our situation is rather critical in this country. The Peishwa has hitherto done nothing for his sirdars who came with me, and none of them have marched from Poona. He has broken the treaty by not producing an army, and he has broken his word with me. He has told Colonel Close that he has urged Dowlut Rao Scindhia not to come to Poona ; and that chief declares that he has invited him and the Raja of Berar to his capital,

"Upon the whole, I am concerned that the alliance will not work on the footing of the treaty. But at all events, he (the Peishwa) has broken the treaty by not producing his army ; and the British Government must be considered as at liberty to act according to its sense of its own interests"†

The Governor-General knew that the Peshwa was averse to the fulfilment of the terms of the Treaty of Bassein. According to 'every received principle of the law of nations,' the Governor-General should either have punished the Peshwa or annulled the Treaty of Bassein, and withdrawn from his alliance altogether. But this would not have suited his purpose. So in violation of 'every received principle of the law of nations,' the Governor-General made up his mind to declare hostilities upon the Maratha confederates. He empowered his brother, Arthur Wellsley, to declare war or peace with the Raja of Berar and Sindhia as the circumstances and his own

* Wellesley's *Despatches*, III, p. 187.

† Again writing on the 19th June, 1803, to General Stuart, General Wellesley said:—"The Peiswa's servants are very profuse in promises but very sparing in performance ; and we have enjoyed so little of the resources of the country, which it is so obviously the advantage of the inhabitants to supply to us, that I am almost induced to suspect counteraction on the part of the government. I shall be convinced of it, if the Peshwa omits much longer to write to Sindhia of which I apprized you of the intention, but he has not yet written." Thus it is evident that the Peshwa had invited Sindhia and the Raja of Berar to come to Poona. According to 'every received principle of the law of nations,' there was no *casus belli* to go to war with the Maratha confederates, who had accepted the invitation of a sovereign, whom it was the policy of the English to look upon as the executive head of the Maratha Empire.

military preparations would dictate him to do so.* In a lengthy despatch marked 'Secret,' to General Wellesley, dated Fort William, June 26th, 1803, the Governor-General wrote :

"The present state of affairs in the Maratha Empire, and the security of the alliance lately concluded between His Highness the Peishwa and the British Government require, that a temporary authority should be constituted at the least possible distance from the scene of eventual negotiation or hostilities, with full powers to conclude upon the spot whatever arrangements may become necessary either for the final settlement of peace, or for the active prosecution of war. In such a crisis, various questions may arise of which the precise tendency cannot be foreseen, and which may demand a prompt decision. The issue of these questions may involve the result of war or peace, and in either alternative the delay of reference to my authority might endanger the seasonable despatch and the ultimate prosperity of the public service.

* * * * *

"Your approved ability, zeal, temper, activity and judgment, combined with your extensive loca experience, your established influence, and high reputation among the Maratha chiefs and states, and your intimate knowledge of my views and sentiments concerning the British interests in the Maratha empire, have determined me to vest these important and arduous powers in your hands.

* * * * *

"I further empower and direct you to assume and exercise the general direction and control of all the political and military affairs of the British Government in the territories of the Nizam, of the Peishwa, and of the Maratha States and chiefs.";

The Governor-General was not content with issuing the above directions empowering his brother to conclude peace or prosecute war with the Marathas. He was suffering from the disease which in modern times is called "earth-hunger." He wanted to fleece the Raja of Berar and Dowlat Rao Sindhia of their most fertile and important territories. On the following day, that is, the 27th June 1803, he wrote a 'most secret' letter to his brother. In this letter he showed himself in his true colours. This letter reveals the secret motive of the Governor-General for going to war with the Marathas. He wanted to bring under the direct administration of his co-religionists and compatriots more territories of the continent of India. He wrote:

"On the receipt of this despatch you will desire Colonel Collins to demand an explicit declaration of the views of Scindhia and of the Raja of Berar, within such a number of days as shall appear to you to be reasonable, consistently with a due attention to the period of the season, and to the facility of moving your army, and of prosecuting hostilities with the advantages which you now possess.

"If that explanation should not be satisfactory on such grounds as in your discretion you may state to Colonel Collins, you will desire Colonel Collins to repair to your camp under a proper escort.

"In this event, or in other state of circumstances which may appear to you to require hostilities, . . . I direct you to use your utmost efforts to destroy the military power of either or of both chiefs (Scindhia and Raja of Berar) . . . . . . It is particularly desirable that you should destroy Scindhia's

* The delegation of plenary powers by the Marquess Wellesley to his brother, the General Wellesley, and General Stuart in 1803 to wage war and conclude peace with the vanquished Princes was illegal. Two eminent lawyers, named R. Ryder and William Adam, were consulted and they were of opinion that Lord Wellesley was not legally competent to delegate his powers to his brother and others. The opinions of the two lawyers named above are given in Pearce's Wellesley, Vol. II, p. 343 *et seq.*

artillery, and all arms of European construction, and all military stores which he may possess . . . . . the actual seizure of the person of Scindhiah, or of Ragojee Bhonslah, would be highly desirable, ... In the event of hostilities, you will take proper measures for withdrawing the European officers from the service of Scindhiah, Holkar, and of every other chief opposed to you.

"You are at liberty to incur any expense requisite for this service, and to employ such emissaries as may appear most serviceable . . . . . In the event of hostilities, I propose to dispatch proper emissaries to Gohud, and to the Rajput Chiefs. You will also employ every endeavour to excite those powers against Scindiah. . . . . . You will consider what steps may be taken to excite Cashee Rao Holkar against Jeshwunt Rao, ... The effectual security of our interests in the Mahratta Empire is the strongest barrier which can be opposed to the progress of the French interests in India; the early reduction of Scindhiah . . . . is certain, and would prove a fatal blow to the views of France."*

In this letter, for the first time, the Governor-General brings forward the French influence in the court of Sindhia as a reason for attacking and altogether crushing the power of that Maratha sovereign. The Governor-General was subject to Franko-phobia. It is probable that his alarm at the French influence was merely a pretext to make the people of England believe that he had just grounds to wage war on the independent Maratha Powers. The natives of England at that time were doing everything they could, to reduce the power of France. The great Pitt was spending money like water to bribe every Christian State of Europe against France. But no man in his senses could have believed that France by any possible means could have, at that time, sent men and materials of war to the shores of India. Mill has thoroughly exposed the Governor-General's Franko-phobia. When Tipu was killed and his place was looted, it was alleged that several documents were discovered in the state archives of Seringapatam, showing the intrigues which that Mahomedan ruler had been carrying on with the French. It has been mentioned, that there are reasons for suspecting the genuineness of those documents. Sindhia was not totally annihilated and his place was not looted. Had it been so, who knows if the British would not have discovered correspondence between Dowlut Rao and Napoleon ?

The Governor-General was not content with empowering his brother, Arthur Wellesley, to declare war or peace with the Marathas. Lake was, at that time, the Commander-in-Chief in India. He was also taken into the confidence of the Governor-General. On the 28th June, 1803, the latter wrote to him a 'most secret and confidential' letter. At that time, General Lake had been in Oudh busily engaged in making preparations for war on Sindhia. The Governor-General wrote to him

"to commence the measures for assembl ng a force, with a view to active operations against Scindhia. You will at the same time enter into my extreme solicitude to avoid every proceeding which can involve expense, and which may not be indispensable to our success. A few days must decide positively whether war will become inevitable. From that moment we must press forward without hesitation, if the alternative should leave no prospect of peace.

"You will be able, ...to collect forces at the necessary points or at least to issue your first orders for that purpose without occasioning any alarm of war."

At the same time, the Governor-General transmitted to him a note containing instructions for corrupting the chiefs and men subject to Sindhia's authority. The note

* Wellington's *Dispatches*, vol. I. pp. 203-206.

is so important, for it teems with maxims and principles promulgated by Machiavelli, that readers are recommended to peruse it in the original in the Marquess of Wellesley's Dispatches.*

Thus it will be seen that all those whom the Governor-General empowered to negotiate with the Marathas were soldiers and therefore anxious for earning the honours and glories and distinctions of war. None of them was desirous of peace. Arthur Wellesley had tasted blood in the campaign against Tipu, which whetted his appetite for more blood. Besides, that campaign not only brought him 'honours and distinction,' but most substantially enriched his pockets. The membership of the Mysore Commission had given him his first initiation in the intrigues of occidental diplomacy, opened up a new field of observation, enlarged his mental horizon, and inspired him with hopes of turning his experience to good account in other parts of India. So he tried to take full advantage of the opportunity which fell to his lot by the extraordinary powers which his brother entrusted him with, for concluding peace or war with the Marathas. Everything pointed to war as the royal road to distinctions and honours. And so he eagerly promoted it.

The same remarks apply with equal force to General Lake. On a wider field, he was trying to utilize the experience he had gained in Ireland. War was the only means to enable him to do so. And so he also eagerly seized every circumstance calculated to bring it about.

But more eager than either General Lake or General Wellesley, was Colonel Collins for war. This officer was the Resident with Dowlut Rao Sindhia.

The Governor-General had not yet issued his final orders regarding the prosecution of war on the Maratha Confederates when he received on the 5th July, 1803, a letter from Colonel Collins dated 12th June, 1803. From this letter it appears that Collins considered it beneath his dignity to personally go and have an interview with Dowlat Rao Sindhia. He deliberately insulted the Maratha prince by sending his agent, Ganpat Roy. However, Sindhia granted an interview to this agent of Colonel Collins on the 11th June, 1803. How far Ganpat Roy correctly reported the substance of the conversation which took place with Sindhia, it is impossible to say. But on this report of Ganpat Roy, Collins wrote :

'As it appeared to me that the evasive conduct of this Durbar was practised, solely with a view to gain time; and having been informed 'that Jeshwunt Rao Holkar, was actually on his march to join the Maharaja, I conceived that your Excellency would deem me inexecusable, were I to defer bringing the question of peace or war to an immediate issue. Accordingly, I addressed a memorial to Dowlat Rao Sindhia calculated to produce this effect, and I herewith do myself the honor to forward copies thereof, in English, and Persian, for the information of your Lordship."

From the memorial, it is clear that Collins never cared to see Sindhia after the interview he had with him on the 28th May, 1803. The tone of the memorial is not very respectful. He concluded the memorial by saying :

"should the Maharaja decline giving Colonel Collins the satisfaction which he now demands, in this case the Colonel requests that Maharaja Dowlat Rao Sindhia will furnish him with a party of

* Vol. III, pp. 167-70.

horse to escort him as far as Aurangabad, together with supplies of grain sufficient for the subsistence of his sepoys and followers, until their arrival at that city."

The gallant Colonel's agent on presenting the memorial to Sindhia, demanded a written reply to it. That which is a curse in the despatch of official business in the British administration of India, namely, red-tape, the British officer would not tolerate in Sindhia. He would not even give Sindhia time to consider the memorial and then answer it. Sindhia sent a verbal message per Collin's agent, which the latter requested Sindhia to commit to writing. The gallant British officer had not the decency to wait for a reply. But in indecent haste, with the object of prejudicing the Governor-General against Sindhia, he wrote:

"Mirza Bauker and Ganpat Roy, are this instant returned. When they were admitted to the presence of Dowlat Rao Sindhia, no person was with him but Balajee Koonjer. ... ... Sindhia said that as yet he had not conferred on matters of business with the Rajah of Berar, but that I might rely on having the explanation I required in two, or three days. Mirza Bauker requested that this answer might be committed to writing, but which the Maharaja would nor permit. The Mirza and Ganpat Roy then took their leave of him in order to return to me.

"On receiving this verbal reply, I wrote to Dowlat Rao Sindhia that I considered it as final, and therefore sincerely lamented its tendency, at the same time I requested that the Maharajah would order his servants to supply me with grain as soon as possible, it being my intention to proceed to Aurangabad without delay."

Thus Collins had made up his mind on bringing about a rupture with the Marathas. For, he himself did not go to Sindhia, nor did he wait for his written reply. Within twenty-four hours of writing the above to the Governor-General, he was furnished with a written reply from Sindhia. The latter wrote to the Resident as follows:

"I received your friendly letter along with a paper conveying your request of dismission, and understand the whole of both their contents. The affairs of our respective states are one and the same, and you are deputed to preserve the relations of friendship on the part of the Honourable Company. I have been prevented from the continuance of the rain from going a second time to see Rajah Raghujee Bhonslah. Whenever the weather clears up, and that I can proceed to the Camp of the Rajah, the attendance of Balajee Koonjer and of Narain Rao Beed will be ordered, and their relations taken into consideration, and after consulting together, you shall then be made acquainted with whatever may be determined on ; with respect to your departure, it is not proper to use haste on this head , intimation was personally given to Gunpat Roy, whose report of the matter you will have received."

Sindhia's letter was a friendly one. He tried to maintain peace, but the British were on the war-path. The manner in which Collins left Sindhia's camp will be mentioned further on. The Resident's letter of the 12th June was received by the Governor-General on the 5th July, 1803. On its receipt, he wrote a 'private and most secret letter' to Lake. He wrote:

"I have just now received a letter from Colonel Collins, under date the 12th of June, which has determined me to carry into execution with all practicable speed, the general outlines of the plan of war against Sindhiah, stated in my letter of the 28th of June. I shall now write to you from day to day, but I would not delay this communication for a moment. Sindhia's object is to gain time. Ours must be to act, between this time, and the month of October. The seizure of Agra would be a real and masterly blow. I know you will attempt it, if prudent."

The Governor-General was highly pleased with the couduct of Collins for the prospect of bringing about the rupture with the Maratha Confederates. The letter of his Secretary, Mr. Edmonstone, to Collins, dated the 6th July, 1803, shows that the Governor-General wanted war and was therefore pleased with Colonel Collins, for his bringing it about.

But while he had made up his mind to deluge the country with bloodshed and murder, and to carry fire and sword through the territories of those who, or rather their predecessors, had helped the British in the acquisition and maintenance of their political power in India, the Marquess Wellesley received two letters from Lord Castlereagh, which seemed to disturb the equanimity of his mind, and make him waver in his determination on war. Lord Castlereagh had succeeded Mr. Dundas at the head of the Indian affairs in England. In his first letter, marked "most secret," dated London, February 14th, 1803, but received by the Marquess Wellesley on the 6th July, 1803, Lord Castlereagh wrote :

"My letter to your Lordship, bearing date the 15th of November, apprized you of the reasons we then had for apprehending that a squadron, preparing at Brest, was destined for the East Indies. His Majesty's Ministers thought it expedient at that time to send your Lordship instructions, upon the presumption of that intelligence being correct, and to take naval precautions accordingly.

"This intention on the part of the French Government, if it ever existed, (which I much doubt,) has long since yielded to the pressing exigencies of their service in St. Domingo. . . , .

"However uncertain and critical the state of things must be deemed to be in Europe, I think I can venture to relieve your Lordship's mind from any apprehension, connected with the interests immediately entrusted to your care, which, * * are happily less exposed to sudden attack than our possessions in any other quarter of the globe.

"Under this satisfactory reflection, that the Company's dominions are in a great degree grown out of the reach of danger from the native powers, and cannot be threatened, if at all from Europe, without long notice and preparation, your Lordship may proceed confidently in executing all the arrangements originally in your contemplation, connected with the restoration of peace. . . .

"The chairs propose bringing the plan, of which your Lordship is in possession, for the reduction of the debt, before the Court on Wednesday next.

In the second letter dated London, March 16th, 1903, and also received by Lord Wellesley on the 6th July, 1803, Lord Castlereagh asked the Governor-General to take steps to reduce Indian debt. He wrote :

"I am sure your Lordship will keep in view how much will be gained in positive strength by directing our exertions, even in war, against the debt, so long as there is little appearance of the enemy being enabled to menace India. However jealous France is of your power in the East, and however steady she may be in her purpose of aiming at positions, from which she might one day hope to shake that power, yet I cannot persuade myself that she has, or can have for a length of time, the means to attempt any direct attack against possessions so defended as ours are by the army now on foot.

"Whatever efforts France may be able to make in Europe, India cannot be considered as more exposed now than in the years 1793-4-5, &c., whilst Tippoo was yet formidable. I must therefore indulge a sanguine hope that your Lordship will find it practicable to adopt a system; even in war, which shall be compatible with our financial objects, and that the surplus revenue, as in the years alluded to, will be still applicable in a large amount to the reduction of debt. If peculiar difficulties arise, we must make corresponding exertions ; but let us save our means till those difficulties appear as far as prudence will pemit.',

These letters placed the Governor-General in a very awkward position. The home authorities urged peace, while he had committeed himself to the prosecution of war. The former enjoined on him economy, but the Governor-General was determined on a course of policy which would entail inevitable expense. In such a situation, he once, it seems, seriously thought of carrying out the intention he had expressed to the Court of Directors not

"to attempt to compel the Peshwa to adhere to the faith of his engagements, at the hazard of involving the Company in a war with the combined Maratha States,"

It appears, he convened his principal counsellors and discussed the matter with them on the 11th July, 1803. His principal counsellor was Mr. (afterward Sir George Hilaro) Barlow. He was the Governor-General *elect*, that is to say, the Court of Directors had decided that in the event of the death, resignation, or departure from India of the Marquess Wellesley, Barlow should take charge of the Government of India. There is an English saying, "set a thief to catch a thief." This man's character and conduct have been fully revealed to the world by one of his co-religionists. This was Sir John Malcolm. Barlow was not worse than the Marquess Wellesley. But while Malcolm had nothing but words of adulation and admiration for the Marquess, but for whose help and the interest he took in him, Malcolm, in all probability, would not have occupied the positions of trust and responsibility in the administration of India which he filled, he had no good words to say for Barlow. This is easily explained when the fact is remembered that Barlow as Governor of Madras had injured Malcolm. Malcolm's condemnation of the Machiavellian policy of Barlow will be referred to, in its proper place.

From the important position which Barlow occupied in the Indian administration, his opinions carried great weight with the Marquess Wellesley. On the 12th July, 1803, he submitted a memorandum to the Governor-General in which he strongly urged immediate declaration of war on the Marathas. He wrote :

"Conceiving it may be satisfactory to your Lordship to know what has occurred to me on a deliberate consideration of the important question discussed yesterday, I shall do myself the honor of standing the result.....

"It only remained, therefore, to determine whether good policy required our persevering or withdrawing, under the unexpected circumstances of the total inability of the Peishwa to fulfil his part of the engagements, of the probability of hostilities with France, of the part taken by the Rajah of Berar, and the confederacy formed between Scindhia the Rajah of Berar and Holkar, of the certainty of the approaching dissolution of the Nizam, and of the nature of the orders received from England.

"If we abandon the alliance, and withdraw our forces, (whatever may be the reasons we may assign for the measure), no other construction will be given, both by friends and enemies, to this change of policy but this ; that we were at least doubtful of the success of the impending military operations. They will never believe that in the present advanced stage of the business, and after all the declarations which have been made by our ministers at the Maratha Courts, that we should abandon a plan which has been pursued with unremitting perseverance for a course of years, and the advantages of which to our interests are so obvious, but from an apprehension of our inability to repel the opposition which has been raised to the consolidation of our alliance with the Peishwa. What will be the effect of the impression on the minds of our friends and enemies ? Our friends

will no longer entertain their present implicit confidence in our power and protection and our enemies will make all India resound with shouts of triumph at our having yielded the field to them. The mischievous consequences which must be produced by this change in the sentiments of the states of India with respect to the British power, cannot be calculated.

"But is it certain, in the event of our withdrawing our forces, that we should be allowed to retain the countries ceded to us by the Peishwa to indemnify us for the expense of the measures undertaken for his support? Is it not to be apprehended that the power which might succeed in usurping the authority of the Poonah Government, would endeavour to compel us to relinquish those countries, by committing continued depredations in them, in the confidence that the same motives which induced us to avoid war when our armies were in the field, and in the most advantageous positions, would influence us still more strongly, when we had to collect those armies again, and which the operations of the most successful campaign could not be expected to place in their present advantageous positions? There is no conjecturing to what lengths the presumptuous character of the Marathas might impel them under such circumstances. Thus we might be compelled to go to war under the disadvantages of loss of national character, and of limited means, and probably after having afforded to the French an opportunity of connecting themselves as auxiliaries with some of the Maratha States.

"Should this be the result, the Government would incur a heavy load of responsibility in England. Its conduct would be first censured for engaging in the alliance, next, for withdrawing from it, and lastly, for placing itself in a situation which reduced it to the alternative of engaging in a war under the disadvantages above stated, or of sacrificing the national character by relinquishing the retained territories.

"With respect to the French, supposing the present questions in Europe not to lead to an immediate rupture, we are now certain that the whole course of their policy has for its object the subversion of the British Empire in India, and that at no distant period of time they will put their plans into execution. It is absolutely necessary for the defeat of these designs, *that no native state should be left to exist in India, which is not upheld by the British power, or the political conduct of which is not under its absolute control.* The restoration of the head of the Maratha Empire to his Government through the influence of the British power, in fact, has placed all the remaining states of India in this dependent relation to the British Government. If the alliance with the Peishwa is maintained, its natural and necessary operations would in the course of time reduce Scindhia (the power which may already be said to be in the interests of France) and the Raja of Berar, to a state of dependence upon the Peishwa, and consequently upon the British power, even if they had acquiesced in the treaty of Bassein. But their unjust opposition to this treaty affords us an opportunity of at once reducing their power to a state that will remove every obstacle to the consolidation of the alliance with the Peishwa, and to the attainment of all its advantages. When can we hope for another opportunity equally favourable, or (under all the probable consequences of withdrawing from the alliance,) when can we hope to have all India again at our command? * * * * Our army, well equipped, has established itself within the heart of the dominions of these chiefs, and within a few marches of their camp, where they are collected without money, resources, or provisions, and where there is every prospect we shall destroy or disperse their whole force at one blow. It is scarcely possible that their military power could be placed in circumstances more favorable for our effecting its destruction."*

Barlow's special pleading for devouring the independent States of India shows the extent to which the wrong-doing prevailed. The unscrupulous Britishers of that period never troubled themselves about the Laws of Nations, much less of the Rights of Man. In the words put in italics are disclosed the real reasons for their

* Wellesley's *Despatches*, vol. III., p. 185 *et seq.*

going to war with the Marathas. It is impossible for any one to justify the war on ethical grounds, or even grounds of political expediency, not to speak of the grounds of the Law of Nations.

The Marquess Wellesley was now encouraged by the opinion of his great counsellor to order the Commander-in-Chief to carry fire and sword into the territories of the Maratha princes. On the 18th July, 1803, he wrote in a 'secret and confidential' letter to Lake:

"I consider an active effort against the Marathas, I mean Scindhia and Berar, (for the Peishwa is *ours*) to be the best possible preparation for a renewal of war with France. You will therefore act confidently, and you will use every effort to prepare for the early execution of the very able plan of operations which you have framed."

While the English were making all these preparations for waging war on, and cutting the throats of their neighbours, what were the Maratha princes doing? It has been said over and over again, that these princes had no intention of going to war. Not only did they express their pacific intentions, but their want of war-like preparations is a strong proof in evidence of the fact that at first they never thought of crossing swords with the English. In his letter of the 12th June, 1803, Collins wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"The distress which has prevailed here, for some days past, is really great; *attafi* sells at five seers for a rupee, grain at five and a half, and grass is scarcely procurable, even at the rate of fifteen rupees for one bullock load. The foregoing detail will enable your excellency to form a judgment of the wretched state to which Scindhia's troops will be reduced, in the event of his prosecuting hostilities, since the prices of all kinds of provisions will, it is expected, daily increase; moreover, there is not, I am credibly informed, fifty thousand rupees in the camp of the Maharaja."

Do these circumstances show the hostile intentions of Sindhia? Had he been originally inclined to go to war with the English, should he not have made preparations for it? He was master of the most fertile tracts of India and so he could have easily brought plenty of money and provisions and troops with him, had he known that he would have to cross blades with the English. But since he made no war-like preparations, it is evident that his intentions were pacific. His enemies knew this and they forced war on him. Mr. Barlow and every British administrator in India advised the Governor-General to take advantage of this situation of the Maratha confederates. It was the English who provoked the Marathas to war, it was they who were the aggressive party and declared hostilities without sufficient cause.

It appears that Collins had an interview with both Dowlat Rao Sindhia and the Raja of Berar on the 4th July, 1803. His own version of the conversations with those princes and their ministers, clearly shows that those princes had not been fully acquainted with the provisions of the Treaty of Bassein and they sincerely professed peace. Of course, that gallant officer wanted war and therefore declared that the 'friendly professions' of those princes were insincere.

His letter dated the 6th July, 1803, as well as the letters of the two Maratha princes

Vol. I., pp. 207-212.

inserted in the Duke of Wellington's Despatches,* are of great historical importance. From them it is evident that the Maratha confederates wanted peace and not war.

But these letters of Sindhia and the Raja of Berar were of no avail in changing the mind of the Governor-General or rather of his brother, Major-General Wellesley; for it was he who had been empowered to conclude peace or war with the Maratha confederates. In reply to these letters, General Wellesley wrote to Collins, as well as to Sindhia, letters which leave no doubt of his hostile intentions. Dating his letter from "Camp, 14th July, 1803," General Wellesley wrote to Collins:

"Dowlut Rao Sindhia and the Raja of Berar have declared in their letters to the Governor-General, that they have no intention to obstruct the arrangement concluded at Bassein between the British Government and the Peishwa; and that they are desirous of maintaining the relations of amity which so long subsisted between the British Government and them, and that they will not ascend the Adjuntee ghaut, or march towards Poona.

"I am sorry to observe, however, that they still intend to advance with their arm es to the Adjuntee ghaut, upon the Nizam's frontier, notwithstanding their peaceable declarations. These declarations have been preceded by others of a directly opposite tendency.* The chiefs have declared, that they were united for the purpose of attacking the British Government and their Allies†; § . . ."

General Wellesley's letter to Sindhia was not a very courteous one and it was against every 'received principle of the law of nations.' It left no doubt in the minds of the Maratha confederates that the Britishers were determined on hostilities. This letter was, as it were, an ultimatum to them. In his letter to Sindhia, General Wellesley asked him to withdraw; but with that cunning, dishonesty and perfidy which characterize diplomatists, no period was fixed when he should withdraw. Writing to Colonel Close, Resident at Puna, on the 17th July, 1803, Gereral Wellesley said:

"I have not fixed when he (Dowlut Rao Sindhia) should withdraw: First, because I wish to keep in my own breast the period at which hostilities will be commenced; by which advantage it becomes more probable that I shall strike the first blow, if I should find hostile operations to be necessary: Secondly, there is every reason to expect instructions from the Governor-General, applicable to the present situation of affairs in India, as well as in Europe. . . .

"By avoiding to fix a day on which Sindhia must retire, I have it in my power to alter my course of action, in conformity to these instructions, in case that measure should be necessary."

By his own showing, this wolf admits how he could produce the pretext of the muddied stream at his convenience to devour the heathen lamb Sindhia. The Maratha confederates understood as much. Totally unprepared as they were for the eventuality of war, it would have shown their cowardice, had they yielded to the threats of the British. They also commenced making war-like preparations.

Collins had threatened Sindhia with his departure as far back as the 12th June, 1803. But he did not depart. It would have been better for all parties had he left

* Where and when?

† When and to whom did these chiefs make this declaration? Neither in the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, nor in those of his brother, is there any record of the chiefs having made such a declaration. One is therefore fully justified in concluding that this was a pure fabrication either by the resident with Sindhia, Colonel Collins, or the future Duke of Wellington.

§ Wellington's Despatches, I. p. 219.

Sindhia's court in the middle of June. His mind was made up for bringing about war between the Marathas and the English. He was biassed against the Maratha confederates. Under such circumstances, keeping him in the responsible position of a negotiator with the Marathas, was a crime, if nothing worse. But it was the policy of the British authorities in India to keep this man with Sindhia so that he might intrigue with and corrupt Sindhia's officials and men. On the 22nd July, 1803, Collins wrote to General Wellesley:

"It appears by the extract of the letter to your address from his Excellency the Governor-General, under date the 27th ultimo, transmitted to me by Mr. Secretary Edmonstone, that I am not at liberty to leave this court unless by your desire. I have to request your instructions for the guidance of my conduct in the event of refusal or procrastination on the part of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, or of Raghojee, to separate and retire with their forces to their respective countries."

General Wellesley was not as yet prepared to order Collins' withdrawal, for by so doing he would have lost "all the advantages of the check" upon Sindhia's men. There are strong grounds for suspecting that Collins did not truly represent Sindhia's views to the Government of India. The published despatches of the Duke of Wellington authorize us to suspect Collins' good faith. Dating his letter on 5th October, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Balaji Kunjer:

"I have received your letter.* When Colonel Collins was the British Resident in the eamp of the Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scinahia, you were there in the character of Vakeel on the part of the Peishwa. It is probable, therefore, that you were not so well acquainted with what passed at the durbar of that chief as you are at present, when you write in the character of one of the Maharaja's ministers; if you had been, you would not have written that *Colonel Collins had quitted the camp without apprizing the Maharaja of his intentions, or going through the customary forms.*"

Of course General Wellesley tries to make out that the statement of Balaji Kunjer was not correct and defends the conduct of Collins. But the words put in *italics,* undoubtedly suggest that there was some foul play on the part of Colonel Collins. It should be remembered that Balaji Kunjer wrote this after the Battle of Assayee when Sindhia had been vanquished and lay at the mercy of the English. Would he have ventured to falsely accuse the representative of the English, who were the victors ? He knew fully well the manner in which the English would have punished Sindhia for bringing a false charge against their late Resident with him.

Again, the letter of General Wellesley to his brother, the Governor-General, dated 11th November, 1803, incidentally mentions the part played by Colonel Collins in bringing about the war. General Wellesley wrote:

"A vakeel has been sent here by Dowlut Rao Scindhia to treat for peace.

"The name of this person is Jeswunt Rao Goorparah, . . . He appeared anxious to prove that Dowlut Rao Scindhia has been desirous to remain at peace with the British Government, and that if Colonel Collins had not quitted his camp upon receiving the letter addressed to me, which immediately preceded the commencement of hostilities, the war would not have taken place."

General Wellesley did not take pains to disprove the assertion of Sindhia's vakil. No evidence has been brought to disprove Sindhia's allegation against Colonel Collins'

* This letter is not among the published despatches of the Iron Duke. It would have been very interesting for historical purposes to have published this letter.

conduct. It would be mere affectation on the part of any one to believe that Colonel Collins was not guilty of foul play in his dealings with Sindhia. With the statements of two reliable men amongst the Marathas, one of whom could have been subjected to a very searching cross-examination at the hands of General Wellesley, had he grounds to suspect his veracity, we are forced to conclude that Collins acted against "every received principle of the law of nations" in thus bringing about this war.

We have to depend for our information and guidance on the letters and despatches of some Christians who were anything but honest and trustworthy where they had to deal with non-Christians. However from the records written by them, there is ample evidence to show that the Company's servants in India left no stone unturned to inveigle the Mahrattas into war.

On the receipt of General Wellesley's letter of the 14th July, 1803, Collins wrote to Sindhia on the 22nd July, 1803 :

"As Colonel Collins understands that Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia held a conference with Raja Ragojee Bhoonslah last night, for the purpose of determining on the answer that should be given to the letter addressed to the Maharaja by the Hon. General Wellesley, Colonel Collins requests that Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia will favor him with a communication of the result of that conference ; and as the Hon. General Wellesley expects an early reply to this letter, the Colonel trusts that the Maharaja will no longer delay writing to the General, in order to satisfy him that his requisitions will be immediately complied with."

As no reply was received within twenty-four hours, Collins addressed a memorial to Sindhia on the 23rd July, 1803. On the same day, he also presented a similar memorial to the Rajah of Berar. In this memorial, Collins again urged Sindhia and the Raja of Berar to separate from one another and return to their respective capitals. On the 24th July, 1803, both the Maratha princes sent in their replies to this memorial. The Raja of Berar wrote :

"The letter which you sent to me is received, and the particulars of its contents thoroughly understood ; the answer to it depends on a meeting between me and Dowlut Rao Scindhia Bahadur ; after we shall have met and personally discussed the subject of it, the reply will then be certainly committed to writing."

Sindhia wrote :

"Your letter is received, and its contents understood. Whenever Senah Saheb Soubah Raja Ragojee Bhonslah and I shall meet, and be seated together in the same place, you will then be requested to attend ; and whatever is to be stated will then be discussed ; an interview between the Raja and me is indispensable on this occasion. If you are resolved on having an audience, come to-morrow, when only two ghurees of the day shall remain. My house is your own."

Accordingly, Collins had an audience with Sindhia on the 25th July. As an answer to the oft-repeated request of Sindhia's returning to his own capital in Hindustan, his minister observed to Collins :

"That the forces of Dowlut Rao and of the Raja of Berar were encamped in their own territories, that those chieftains had solemnly promised not to ascend the Ajuntee ghaut, nor to march to Poona: that they had already given his Excellency the most noble the Governor-General assurances in writing under their own seals, that they never would attempt to subvert the treaty of Bassein, which assurances were unequivocal proofs of their friendly intentions : that they proposed sending vakeels to

the Peishwa, in order to obtain an assurance from his Highness similar to that which they had lately received from the Hon. General Wellesley : lastly, that the treaty now negotiating between Scindhia and Holkar was not completely settled, and that until it was finally concluded, the Maharaja could not return to Hindustan."

These arguments adduced by Sindhia's minister in defence of his master's stay in the Deccan were very cogent and valid. Of course, Collins tried to traverse them, but it appears that he failed in his attempt. In the shape of a letter dated 26th July 1803, he informed General Wellesley the result of the interview he had with Sindhia on the previous day. This letter was received by General Wellesley on the 31st July, 1803. General Wellesley, in acknowledging the receipt of this letter, wrote to Colonel Collins :

"They (the Maratha confederates) now pretend that they want the same assurance from the Peishwa, although they must know that his Highness has no power to do them any injury, excepting that which he derives from the support of his Government by the British troops.

"The fact that Sindhia has not concluded his peace with Jaswunt Rao Holkar, which is now acknowledged, is the strongest reason for pressing forward at the present moment the decision, whether there shall be peace with security, or war ; besides it is in conformity with the instructions from his Excellency the Governor-General."

On the 30th July, 1803, Dowlat Rao Sindhia wrote to Collins :

"I have received your letter, together with a copy of your address to Senah Saheb Soubah Bahadur, and thoroughly understood the contents of both.

"In consequence of the haste with which you require an answer, and urge your departure, Senah Saheb Bahadur came to-day to my tent, where we had an interview. I shall return Senah Saheb Bahadur's visit at twelve o'clock to-morrow, on which day do you also repair to his tent, when only six ghurries of daylight shall remain, that we may, in the presence of each other, discourse of whatever is to be discussed. It is not proper for you to hurry your march. Do not depart, but come to-morrow, at the time appointed, to the tents of Senah Saheb Soubah Bahadur. Your going off with such expedition is repugnant to good sense."

He had an interview with both these chieftains on the 31st July, 1803. How far he has correctly reported the purport of this interview, it is impossible to say. In his letter to General Wellesley dated 3rd August, 1803, he writes :

"In my conference with the Maharaja and the Raja of Berar, on the 31st ult., when I observed to those chieftains, that, if they did not instantly retire from the frontier of the Nabob Nizam, you would no longer delay taking advantage of your present position, Sreedhur Punt, without hesitation, replied, that, should the Honorable General Wellesley commence hostilities, or order the British forces to advance towards the Adjuntee Ghaut, in either of these events, Raghojee Bhonslah and Dowlut Rao Scindhia would consider themselves at liberty to march their troops in whatever direction they might think proper."

One should be very chary in believing that either of the Maratha princes, or any one of their ministers made use of such threatening words as are put in the mouth of Shridhur Pant. The object which Collins aimed at was war and not peace. And so it is very probable that he deliberately misrepresented the substance of the conversation he had with the Maratha confederates at his last interview with them. This view, that is, his deliberate misrepresentation, receives weight from the fact that both those chieftains addressed on the 1st August, 1803, an amicable letter to General Wellesley.*

* Wellington's Desp. Vol. I., p. 276.

From this letter it will be observed that they were desirous of peace; they tried their best to avoid war.

Collins unceremoniously left Sindhia's camp on the 1st August, 1803. The war was now inevitable. On the receipt of this news and of the letter mentioned above, General Wellesley declared war on the 6th August, 1803. On that day, he wrote a very discourteous letter to Dowlat Rao Sindhia and issued a memorandum in which he justified the war. As these documents are of great historical importance, they are published in Wellington's Despatches, Vol. I, pp. 287, 289, etc.

Thus it will be seen that this war was one of wanton aggression without any provocation, waged by the British against those with whom a sense of gratitude should have dictated them to preserve peace. The ancestors of both the Raja of Berar and Sindhia had greatly helped the British in those days when they had not established their supreme political power in India but were struggling hard to gain a footing on the Indian soil. "The sins of the father are visited on the heads of his descendants" is a very true saying. Mahadji Sindhia and Mudaji Bhonsle were traitors to their country for the help they rendered to the foreigners. Mahadji Sindhia and Mudaji Bhonsle were lacking in forethought and proper statesmanship, for not following the example and advice of Nana-Fadnavis in withholding all help from the East India Company's representatives in India. Their successors had to rue their follies.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXIV

SIR PHILIP FRANCIS ON THE MARATHA WAR

It was several months after the Second Maratha War had been commenced, that its news reached England. Sir Philip Francis was then a member of Parliament and as such he moved the House of Commons on the 14th March, 1804 :—

"that the 35th clause of the 24th of the King, should be read, *viz,*—'whereas to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and policy of this nation, be it enacted, *&c.*"

Then addressing himself to the speaker, he said :

"In moving to have this clause now read, I have two objects, 1st, to remind the House of their own unanimous resolution, on which the subsequent act of Parliament was founded; and then to show that, in the motion which I propose to submit to the House, I am governed by that resolution, and aim at nothing but to inforce the execution of that law ....I do not believe it will be asserted by any man, that it is very right to pass laws for the better government of a distant dominion, and very wrong to inquire whether such laws are obeyed or not .....All I contend for, in the first instance is, that a British Governor who commences a war in India, is *prima facie* doing that which the law prohibits; that his own act of itself puts him on his defence; that he is bound to justify on the case; and that, until he has so justified his conduct, the presumptions are against him......Since the prohibitory act passed in 1783, I appeal to the House whether we have heard of anything from India but war and conquest; many victories, and great acquisitions, with only now and then a short interval of repose, to take breath and begin again .. almost all these wars are supposed to originate in acts of provocation and aggression committed by the weak against the strong. The strength of any single Indian state at any time, and now I believe of all of them put together, is not to be compared to the military power and resources of the English......We hear little or nothing of what the opposite, and possibly the injured party, have to say for themselves. Ever since I have known anything of Indian affairs, I have found that the prevailing disease of our governments there has been a rage of making war .....I ask, is it proper or not that Parliament should know, why this war was undertaken, for what purposes it has been pursued, and with what success it has been attended; and finally, has it the sanction aud approbation of the Court of Directors, and of His Majesty's ministers ? .....The orders given by Lord Wellesley, in consequence of which the hostilities began on the Malabar coast, must have been dated sometime in June or early in July last. I beg of the House to observe the dates; we are now in the middle of March : so that 8 months and a half must have elapsed since the orders were given, and no information received at home on that subject. This is a case which the act ot Parliament has foreseen and provided for. The words of the law are, that 'in all cases, where hostilities shall be commenced or treaty made, the Governor-General and council shall, by the most expeditious means they can devise, communicate the same to the Court of Directors, together with a full state of the information and intelligence, upon which they shall have commenced such hostilities or made such treaties, and their motives and reasons for the same at large.' Until it shall appear in evidence that this delay of information directly from Lord Wellesley is not owing to any neglect or omission on his part, I am bound to presume that there is a fault somewhere.',

He concluded his speech by moving :

"That there be laid before this House copies or extracts of all dispatches received from the Governor-General of Bengal, or from the presidencies of Fort St. George and Bombay, as far as

such dispatches relate to or account for hostilities, now or lately subsisting between the said governments and any of the Mahratta princes or states; with the dates of the receipts of sueh dispatches."—"Copies or extracts of all the correspondences between the said governments and any of the Mahratta princes or states, relative to the said hostilities."—"Copies or extracts of all orders or instructions sent to India by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, on the same subject."

Lord Castlereagh informed the House that he was ready to comply with the motion as soon as the despatches were received. So Francis withdrew his motion.

Three weeks afterwards, on the 6th April, 1804, he again brought forward his motion, which was opposed by Lord Castlereagh, for he said "that no direct communication had been received from Bengal, either by sea or land, concerning the hostilities in question." So again Francis had to withdraw his motion.

A month afterwards, on 7th May, he brought forward his motion, when the first two portions were agreed to, but the last one was negatived by a majority of members.

But the papers were not produced, for they had not been received from India.

Again, on the 15th March, 1806, Sir Philip Francis asked the question whether at that day the Court of Directors or the Select Committee had received any direct communication from Lord Wellesley of the origin and motives of that War.

Lord Castlereagh's answer being in the negative, Sir Philip Francis said :

"The fact of itself deserves the attention of the house; since nothing can be more precise and peremptory than the injunction of the law, by which the Governer-General and Council are ordered, in all cases where hostilities shall be commenced, to communicate the same to the Directors, by the most expeditious means they can devise, with a full state of the information and intelligence upon which they shall have commenced such hostilities, and their motives and reasons for the same at large. I now, Sir, beg leave to give notice that it is my intention, with permission of the house, to bring under their consideration a general view of the state of the British dominion in India, and to make a motion thereupon. . . . ."

Accordingly on April 5, 1805, he made "a masterly and luminous speech" on the state of affairs in India. He said :—

"With regard to the origin of our connection with India, it was hardly necessary for him to remind the house, that it was originally purely commercial, but it was marked on the part of the native princes with every appearance of good understanding, and even kindness. They not only afforded us every facility for carrying on an advantageous trade, but actually conferred on us immunities and exemptions which many of their own subjects did not enjoy. It was, in a mercantile point of view, wise in the native princes to encourage trade with foreign nations. But while their commercial eye was open, their political eye was closed. They did not act on those principles which had so effectually excluded European nations from the dominion of China. It was not till 1765, that our situation in India sustained an important change. Our first connection with Bengal was in the character of adventurers. After that period we began to assume the character of sovereigns. But what was then the language of Lord Clive, a man to whom we owe the erection of our immense eastern dominion? His language was, 'my resolution and my hopes will always be to confine our conquests and our possessions to Bengal, Behar and Orissa. To go farther is, in my opinion, a scheme so extravagantly ambitious and absurd, that no governor and council in their senses can ever adopt it, unless the whole system of the Company's interest be first entirely new modelled. . . . .' He himself knew that the government of that day fully adopted these principles of limited dominion. When in 1773 he went with the other commissioners to India, the government gave the

most positive instructions to see that the same principles were followed up, and the commands of the directors were absolute on the subject."

Then Francis referred to the Acts of 1784 and 1793 prohibiting wars of conquest in India. He proceeded :

"Of the origin or justice of many of the wars in India, the house and the public were frequently, or rather always, without the means of forming a proper judgment. We had never any evidence but the testimony of one of the belligerent powers against the other, and therefore such testimony was to be received with diffidence. We knew only in general that wars had been begun, that great acquisitions were made, and we gave ourselves little trouble to ascertain how far they arose, either out of justice, or necessity. The native princes of India had no ambassadors to plead their cause. They saw their country overrun, their wealth destroyed, and then they had only the satisfaction of being told that they had been actuated by lawless ambition. Many members might not, perhaps, be aware that there formerly existed in the government of Bengal a commission of Persian correspondence, through which our relations with the native princes were conducted. In looking, however, to the vast body of papers on the table, he had not been able, after the most diligent inquiry, to find above three or four short documents, containing no intelligence of the slightest importance. This correspondence was now, therefore, either altogether abolished, or had for a considerable time been suspended. Thus were the house and the public without means of judging of the origin of contests in India. Our commissionaries might be honest persons, and their representations might be frequently founded in fairness and truth. But we were forced to believe them, without knowing what was the nature of the remonstrances of the native princes, or what sacrifices they had made for the preservation of peace." . . . . .

Then after referring to the Indian princes who had been extirpated by the British, he said :

"But with all this extent of Empire, with all that variety of dominion, the thirst of conquest remained unbounded, and the positive law of parliament for the limitation of our territories has been again violated, by a war with the Mahratta powers. The pretext for the war struck him as absurd and indefensible in the highest degree. There was not the slightest ground for supposing that the Mahrattas entertained any views hostile to our power. . . . .He knew it was common to represent the native princes in the most odious light, as absolute monsters of depravity ; but from the language of those employed under the government of Lord Wellesley, it was easy to see in what light these descriptions should be considered."

Then the manner in which Colonel Palmer and Colonel Close represented the Peshwa in their letters to the Governor-General, extracts from which have already been given in a previous chapter, was mentioned by him at some length. Then he said :

"Thus it is that a native prince is loaded with abuse by the Government of India, that he is called on to give up a great proportion of his dominions, and all this for the purpose of securing tranquil possession of his throne.". . . .

He

"directed the attention of the house to the manner in which Scindhia was spoken of by the officers in the Indian Government. It is in terms such as these that a high spirited Prince was vilified and traduced, though it did not appear that he ever entertained any views hostile to our interests. . . . . He was aware that the great argument against the Mahrattas was their harbouring French officers among them, with views evidently hostile to our superiority. It was even asserted that there was an army of 14,000 French troops, under Captain Perron. Of the existence of such a body of troops there was not a single tittle of evidence before the house. . . . .Indeed, after the minutest investigation, he found that there were not in the whole Mahratta army more than 12 French

officers. . . . . As to any wish of Scindhia to admit French troops into his dominions, he denied its existence. It was notorious that Scindhia abhorred the idea of foreign troops in any part of his states. . . . In no view of the case, did he think, then that the justice or necessity of the war had been established in a satisfactory manner. The reluctance shown against the proud and insolent terms of our treaty was natural. It would have been astonishing if it had not existed. The hon. gent. desired members to put the matter to their own feelings. Was it not natural for a high spirited Chief to spurn at terms so abject ? To be told that the capital of the Mahratta Empire was to be in the hands of a British garrison, and to be supported by the native princes, was surely the extremest degradation. It was unquestionably adding injury to insult. . . .Human nature was the same in all countries on some grand subjects of reasoning and feeling. If we should commend European sovereigns resenting insolence and repelling oppression, should we not allow something to the feelings of a Mahratta Chief, indignant at seeing the Capital of his Empire in the hands of a foreign garrison ?—He called on gentlemen to think and feel, and then he thought there could be little doubt on the result of their inquiries. He was himself not satisfied that the war against Scindhia was just or necessary. He found nothing in the papers on the table to support such an opinion . . . . . He said, with great emphasis, we first had commerce, commerce produced factories, factories produced garrisons, garrisons produced armies, armies produced conquests, and conquests had brought us into our presest situation."

He concluded by moving :

"That this house adheres to the principle established by its unanimous resolution of the 28th of May, 1782, ... 'that to pursue schemes of conquest and extention of dominion in India, are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of this nation.' "

This motion found support from 46 members only, while against it were as many as 105, thus showing a majority of 59 against it.

Thus ended the discussion on the Maratha War in the British Parliament.

CHAPTER XXV.

CAMPAIGN OF INTRIGUES & CONSPIRACIES AGAINST SINDHIA

We have already mentioned the causes which brought the war about and the motives and conduct of those Britishers engaged in it. We are forced to rely exclusively on the Despatches and letters of intensely partisan Englishmen, and therefore it is necessary for us to discount freely their statements. The dominant motive of these contemporary chroniclers, writing from an English point of view, was clearly to justify the policy of the Marquess Wellesley towards the Marathas. There is, unhappily, no counter-pleading (as yet published), written by a contemporary, to set forth the case of the Marathas. But in the progress of the war and the prosecution of the hostilities the chronicles of the Europeans enable us to trace the movements of their armies, if not those of their enemies and the conduct of their troops in the field.

It has been already mentioned that General Wellesley did not intimate to Sindhia or the Raja of Berar the date on which they should withdraw their troops from the position they had occupied within their own territories but not far from the Nizam's frontiers. In the proper sense of the language of diplomacy, no *ultimatum* was sent to the Maratha confederates. But with the unceremonious way in which Colonel Collins, the Resident with Sindhia, left the camp of that prince, the last hope for peaceful negotiations was gone.

The Maratha confederates perfectly understood the gravity of their situation. But without losing their presence of mind, they collected the portion of their army still remaining faithful to them and prepared for the crisis.

But they did not know the tactics which the British were employing against them. If the Marathas were the vanquished party, they did not lose their prestige in fair fight, but because the English had opened campaigns of conspiracies and low intrigues and pitted traitors against them. It is necessary to speak in detail of the conspiracies and intrigues of the English against the Marathas.

The Maratha confederacy, in its palmiest days, consisted of the Raja of Berar, Sindhia, Holkar and the Gaekwar, all owning the Peshwa as their executive head. But when the British attempted to sow dissensions amongst the Marathas, and used every art to arouse jealousy and hatred towards each other, they succeeded in detaching the Gaekwar from the Confederacy. The Gaekwar was the first to join the British. The Peshwa was now merely a puppet in their hands. Holkar also played into their hands. But it was not quite certain that he would not join the others, namely, Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. Holkar was, of necessity, compelled to veer with the wind until change of times and circumstances would force him to declare himself. It was therefore necessary to leave no stone unturned to induce him not to join the Raja of Berar and Sindhia. We have already narrated the means which had been adopted in bringing this about. While the Bhonsle and Sindhia were being bullied, Holkar alone was being

flattered and cajoled by the English. The then representative of the house of Holkar was not a statesman. He easily fell into their snares. On the 16th July, 1803, General Wellesley wrote a letter which flattered the vanity of Holkar.* From the concluding paragraph of this letter, it would seem that smooth and specious promises had been held out to Holkar to deter him from joining Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. It is probable that Holkar had been duped with such promises. This conjecture is based on the facts that Holkar did not render any assistance to Sindhia and the Raja of Berar while the Britishers were carrying fire and sword in their territories; but when the Maratha confederates were compelled to conclude peace with them, it was Holkar who declared hostilities against the English and invited the others to join him. Holkar's conduct can only be explained on the supposition that when he discovered that the English had played false with him and had fed his mind with promises which they knew they would never fulfil, he saw no other alternative than that of going to war with them. However the English stole a march on him by preventing him from joining the Raja of Berar and Sindhia by holding out smooth though false promises.

But there was possibility of his joining the confederates. So the Britishers had entered into intrigues to weaken him in the event of his so doing. One of Holkar's officers was Amir Khan, a Pathan soldier of fortune. It was with him that the English intrigued and conspired. He was encouraged to betray Holkar. Amir Khan had joined Jaswant Rao Holkar since the latter had made his escape from Nagpur. It was necessary to weaken Holkar by buying over Amir Khan. The English tried to make it appear that the Nizam had entertained this Pathan adventurer. The Nizam, of course, could not do anything of the sort, without their advice (or rather, their order), for the subsidiary alliance had placed him altogether at their mercy.

On the 28th April, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to General Stuart that:

"Meer Khan (Amir Khan ?), Holkar's Sirdar, in command of his largest detachment, still keeps open his negotiation with the Nizam to enter his Highness' service. On the 2nd of May, therefore, we shall be in greater strength than ever at Poonah, and have attained one great object of our expedition; and if Holkar should not be weakened by the defection of Meer Khan, at least his confidence in that chief must be shaken."

From the above extract, could there be any doubt that the Nizam had been ordered to carry on intrigues with Amir Khan? This conjecture derives additional weight from

* General Wellesley wrote:

"Much time has elapsed since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you, although I am anxious to cultivate the good understanding which has subsisted between the Honourable Company's government and you.

"With this view, I now send you a copy of the treaty concluded at Bassein between the Honourable Company and Rao Pandit Purdhaun; from the general defensive tenor of which you will observe, that the peace and security of India are provided for.......

"That being the case, whatever others may do, I have little doubt but that you will conduct yourself in the manner which your own interests will dictate, and that you will continue in peace with the Company.

"I send this letter in charge of Kawder Nawaz Khan, a respectable officer, who enjoys my confidence, and who will explain anything you desire to know respecting my wishes."

General Wellesley's letter to Major Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hydarabad, dated 3rd May, 1803, in the course of which he wrote:

"I have received several letters from Colonel Stevenson upon the subject of the negotiation between the officers of the Government of His Highness the Nizam, and Meer Khan, to take that Chief into His Highness' service. It appears that His Highness consents to take into service only 3000 men, whereas the number of Meer (Amir ?) Khan's followers amounts to 25,000 according to his statement.

"From my experience of these native armies I doubt whether Meer Khan will produce at muster more than double the number of men that His Highness consents to receive; but when I am considering the means of defending His Highness' long line of frontier from the plunder of a light body of horse, I cannot refrain from recommending that, whatever may be Meer Khan's numbers, His Highness should take them into pay. If hostilities should be commenced, the expense will be more than repaid to him and the people under his government, and the very circumstance of the purchase of the service of a chief commanding so large a body of horse, of such repute as Meer Khan, and much in the confidence of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, will certainly shake the general confidence of his army, and may have the effect of preventing the threatened hostilities."

General Wellesley's despatches show that the Nizam and his officers had grounds for believing that the English would help them in paying a part of the expenses to be incurred in hiring Amir Khan and his troops. Dating his letter from Puna, 31st May, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Kirkpatrick, Resident at Hydarabad:

"I have the honor to enclose a letter which I have received from Colonel Stevenson, written in answer to one from me of the 26th instant, in which I sent him a copy of the report of Moonshee Uzzeez Oollah, on the subject of the supposed consent by Colonel Stevenson, that the British Government should pay half of the expense to be incurred in hiring Meer Khan and his troops.

"The transaction has not the appearance of a very candid one, either on the part of the Government at Hyderabad, or on that of the Nizam's officers with Colonel Stevenson. However, he resisted firmly all their attempts to induce him to sign a paper by which he should engage that the British Government would pay half of the expense; . . . . . .

"I cannot tell, from his letter of the 28th, whether he had despatched the letter to Meer Khan of which I sent you the translation." . . .

General Wellesley's letter of the 22nd June, 1803, to Major Kirpatrick throws much side-light on the shady transactions of the English with Amir Khan. He wrote:

"There appears certainly to have been a mistake or misunderstanding between Colonel Stevenson and Raja Mohiput Ram, in respect to the share of the expense of hiring the troops under Meer Khan, *which it was supposed the British Government would defray*. In consequence of my orders, however, upon that subject, Colonel Stevenson has set Meer Khan right, in regard to the British Government being bound by his letter to that chief, by a second letter, written with the knowledge of the Sirdars in the Nizam's service. . . . . .

"It would certainly be desirable to discover whether Raja Mohiput Ram really misunderstood Colonel Stevenson's intention, or wilfully deceived his employers. But, considering all the circumstances of the present moment, I believe that it would be best to defer the inquiry to a future period."

The words put in italics show the impression that had existed in the minds of the Nizam's officers. It does not appear that there was ever any inquiry to discover whether Raja Mahipat Ram wilfully deceived his employers. But it passes our understanding why Raja Mahipat Ram should have wilfully deceived his employers. However, Amir Khan was not entertained by the Nizam. The reason for the Nizam

not taking him in his service is nowhere given. On the 18th June, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Kirkpatrick :

"I understand that Meer Khan has withdrawn to the northward, and it is probable that he has heard of the disinclination of the Nizam's government to hire all his troops."

Although the Nizam did not employ Amir Khan, it is more than probable that he, though in the service of Holkar, was in the pay of the Britishers, and that in the event of Holkar's joining the confederacy of Sindhia and the Raja of Berar, he would have deserted his master and gone over to the English. It would seem that, from this time, Amir Khan served the interests of the latter so well, that in 1818, he was given the principality of Tonk.

However, Holkar did not join the Raja of Berar and Sindhia. The English succeeded remarkably well in preventing him from making peace with the other members of the Maratha Confederacy. Had he been a far-seeing statesman he would not have played into the hands of the English.

But the defection of Holkar from the Maratha Confederacy was not considered enough by the English to ensure their success in the event of hostilities with Sindhia and the Bhonsle. The Marquess Wellesley instructed the Commander-in-Chief in India, General Lake, to open a campaign of low intrigues and conspiracies against Sindhia. In the 'Note' attached to his 'most secret and confidential' letter to him, dated 28th June, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley indicated the principal lines on which the intrigues and conspiracies should be carried on. But on second thoughts, the Governor-General discovered that his instructions were not sufficient for the purpose he had in view.

It has been already said before that from the very day of his making up his mind to go to war with Tipu, the Governor-General commenced intrigues and conspiracies also to reduce the power of Dowlut Rao Sindhia. Four or five years' campaign of low intrigues and conspiracies seemed to the Marquess Wellesley not to have made any impression on Sindhia's power. So now with great vigor and with all his might and main he set to the nefarious task of playing off all the princes and peoples of India, then known to the foreigners, against Sindhia. In his 'secret' letter, dated Fort William, July 27th, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley mentioned in more details, the princes and chiefs whom the Commander-in-Chief should bribe to undermine Sindhia's authority. From the perusal of this letter it is clear how the Governor-General and in fact generally the Englishmen at that time in India, were lacking in all sense of honour and averse to maintaining peace with the independent Maratha States. The imaginary French influence in the Councils of Sindhia served as a pretext to the Governor-General for going to war with Sindhia. At the time when he wrote this letter to Lake, negotiations were still proceeding with Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. The demand was made on those princes that they should retreat from the frontier of the Nizam's territories to their own capitals. Had they complied with this demand, the perfidious Governor-General would have still gone to war with them. For, he wrote to Lake, on the 27th July, 1803, when as said before, negotiations were still proceeding with the Maratha confederates, that :

"In a state of profound peace and even of alliance with Scindhia, the necessity of providing for our own security would justify a formal demand for the removal of a danger, so imminent, from the frontier of our dominions. The refusal of Sindhia to comply with such a demand would afford a just ground of war against that chief; and any true or false plea of inability on the part of Sindhia to control the movements or to reduce the power of this French state, would authorize and require the British government to assume the protection of its own territories, and to remove with its own hand the proximate cause of insecurity and alarm. Your Excellency will therefore be pleased to understand that *the most desirable object in prosecuting hostilities against Scindhia on the North-Western frontier of Hindustan appears to me to be the entire reduction of M. Perron's regular corps.** This operation necessarily includes the capture or destruction of all his artillery and military stores and especially of all arms of European construction."

The words put in italics show the so-called object for which the Governor-General was so anxious to go to war with Sindhia. But the English never made this a ground of their negotiations with any of the Maratha Princes. There was no 'French state' in the dominion of the Raja of Berar. Why did the Governor-General go to war with him, supposing his real object in prosecuting hostilities were to entirely reduce the power of the 'French State' in the dominion of the independent Maratha powers? But the Governor-General's special pleading was merely a cloak to cover his unrighteous and unjustifiable designs.

Further on, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief in India:

"Reviewing these statements Your Excellency will observe that the most prosperous issue of a war against Scindhia and the Raja of Berar on the North-Western frontier of Hindustan would in my judgment comprize,

"1st. The destruction of the French state now formed on the banks of the Jumna together with all its military resources;

"2nd. The extension of the Company's frontier to the Jumna, with the possession of Agra, Delhi and a sufficient chain of posts on the Western and Southern banks of the Jumna;

"3rd. The possession of the nominal authority of the Moghul;

"4th. The establishment of an efficient system of alliance with all the petty states to the Southward and the Westward of the Jumna from Jaynagar to Bundelcund;

* In a speech in the House of Commons Sir Philip Francis quoted an opinion on this point passed by Warren Hastings. "Sir," said the great Pro-Consul to him, "the danger you allude to in the progress the Marathas are making in the art of casting cannon, in the use and practice of artillery, and in the discipline of their armies is imaginary. The Marathas can never be formidable to us in the field on the principles of an European army. They are pursuing a scheme in which they can never succeed, and by doing so they detach themselves from their own plan of warfare, on which alone, if they acted wisely, they would place dependence." In the speech on *The State of Affairs in India,* delivered in the House of Commons on April 5, 1805, and reproduced in Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. IV., Francis said :—

"It was. . . . . urged that the French officers would introduce European tactics among the Maratha troops. This, so far from striking his mind as an evil, was a thing much to be desired, if war was to be kept up with the Maratha states. It was by abandoning their own irregular mode of fighting that they suffered so severely, and were so effectually repulsed. Had they persevered in the irregular warfare common to their country, they would have exhibited an appearance far more formidable, and displayed a resistance far more dreadful. The history of all ages proved the truth of this assertion. . . . . . . His view of the fighting of the Mahrattas had been well understood by military men. Mr. Hastings. . . . . was fully of this opinion." (p. 232).

"5th. The annexation of Bundelcund to the Company's dominions."

'Earth-hunger' was the real motive which prompted the Governor-General to go to war with the Maratha Confederates. To reduce and annihilate (if possible) the power of Sindhia he entered into a course of intrigues perhaps unparallelled in the history of of any country. He dignified these low intrigues and plots by using the euphemistic expression 'political negotiations'. Lake, although a ruffian, was not so well versed in the execution of these conspiracies and intrigues as the Governor-General's brother, General Wellesley. It was therefore necessary to furnish Lake with an assistant who was a past master in the art of that policy which forms the cornerstone on which has been raised the structure of British rule in India. The name of the assistant was Mr. Græme Mercer. Although a medical man, he had been employed in diplomatic service as well. He had learnt his art, based on the maxims of Machiavelli, at the feet of some of the most distinguished European diplomatists. On July 22nd, 1803, Edmonstone, Secretary to Government, wrote to him a 'most secret letter, in which he was ordered to set afoot intrigues amongst those who were dependent on Sindhia.

"It is understood that those chiefs are very generally averse to the authority of the Mahratta chieftain (*i.e.* Scindhia), and that they would readily embrace any effectual means which might be proposed to them for the purpose of obtaining an emancipation from that authority."

It is nowhere explained, how the British arrived at the understanding that the chiefs were averse to the authority of Sindhia.

He was ordered to intrigue with those chiefs, by promising them

"the undisturbed possession of their hereditary tenures on the condition of their zealous and ready co-operation with the British government, to the extent of their respective means, in expelling the troops of Dowlut Rao Scindhia from that quarter of Hindustan, and preventing any future attempts on the part of that chieftain, or of any other foreign power, to establish an authority in those provinces."

To successfully carry on the campaign of intrigues set afoot amongst the chiefs dependent on Sindhia, a few qualified military officers were placed under Mr. Mercer's direction and the Collectors of Allahabad, Cawnpore and Etawa were directed to honour his drafts on the Governor-General for such sums of money as he might require for the purposes of the secret service.

At the same time, the Marquess Wellesley set afoot intrigues with the Mughal Emperor of Delhi. He was not content with the attempts made to alienate the loyalty of the subjects of Sindhia. He wanted to possess the person of the Mughal Emperor. It will be remembered that Warren Hastings had betrayed the Emperor into the hands of the Maratha chieftain, Mahadji Sindhia. The Emperor was dependent on Sindhia and he never made any complaint to anybody regarding the treatment he was receiving at the hands of the Marathas. To all appearances, he was well-treated and well taken care of by Sindhia. Yet the Governor-General commenced his intrigues with him by raising false hopes in his breast. He addressed a letter to the Emperor which he forwarded to General Lake with a request to despatch it "with every practicable degree of secrecy and

caution." The letter reproduced in the footnote* exhibits cant and hypocrisy, of which the Governor-General was a past master. There is no need to expose the lies and falsehoods with which it abounds, because these are so palpable and transparent.

Lake was instructed to forward this letter to the Emperor through a trustworthy man. The Governor-General wrote to the Commander-in-Chief in India on the 27th July, 1803 :

"It will be proper that my letter to his Majesty should be despatched with every practicable degree of secrecy and caution. I have reason to believe that Syed Rezza Khan, who has long resided at Dehli, in the capacity of agent on the part of the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, at the court of his Majesty, may safely be trusted on this occasion. If upon enquiry your Excellency should find no cause to dissent from this opinion, your Excellency will be pleased to render Syed Rezza Khan the channel for the transmission of the letter, *under such instructions as may appear to your Excellency to be applicable to the occasion.* In this event your Excellency will deem it expedient to direct that agent to transmit to your Excellency accurate and regular information of every transaction at Delhi which may come to his knowledge,

"The arrangement to be finally concluded with his Majesty, involves a question of great political and national importance, which will form the subject of future deliberation. . . . . . I entertain no doubt that his Majesty will be cordially disposed to place himself under the British protection without any previous stipulation."

A few words in the above extract have been put in *italics,* the importance of which will be presently noticed. Neither in his letter to the Emperor Sháh Alam nor in that to Lake, the Marquess specified the advantages that would accrue to the Mugal Emperor by his intriguing with the English. Nevertheless, false hopes were raised in the breast of the Emperor. It was quite reasonable for him to hope, as it was within the range of probability, from the letter of the Governor-General, that he would be

* Lord Wellesley wrote to the Delhi sovereign:

"Your Majesty is fully apprized of the sentiments of respect and attachment which the British Government has invariably entertained towards your royal person and family.

"The intrigues and indignities to which your Majesty and your illustrious family have been exposed since the time your Majesty unhappily transferred the protection of your person to the power of the Mahratta state, have been a subject of unceasing concern to the Honourable Company and to the British administration in India ; and I have deeply regretted that the circumstances of the times have hitherto precluded the inter position of the British power for the purpose of affording to your Majesty effectual relief from the oppressive control of injustice, rapacity and inhumanity.

"In the present crisis of affairs, it is probable that your Majesty may have the opportunity of again placing yourself under the protection of the British Government, and I shall avail myself with cordial satisfaction of any event which may enable me to obey the dictates of my sincere respect and attachment to your royal house.

"If your Majesty should be disposed to accept the asylum, which, in the contemplation of such an event, I have directed his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Oude to offer to your Majesty, in the name of the British Government, your Majesty may be assured that every demonstration of respect and every degree of attention which can contribute to the ease and comfort of your Majesty and the royal family, will be manifested on the part of the British Government, and that adequate provision will be made for the support of your Majesty and of your family and household.

"At a proper season his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief will have the honour of communicating to your Majesty my further sentiments on the subject of the proposed arrangement."

again placed at the head of the Empire of India; that the authority wrested from him by the Marathas would be restored to him by the English. Such must have been the hopes and expectations of this old Emperor. It also seems probable that the Commander-in-Chief being authorized by the Governor-General to give such instructions to Syed Raza Khan as would be applicable to the occasion, in order to succeed in his intrigues with the Emperor, must have instructed his agent to feed the mind of Sháh Alam with smooth and specious promises which he knew would never be fulfilled. When Tipu was killed, a part of the Mysore Dominion was restored to the Raja of Mysore. That was the act of the Marquess Wellesley and it was done, as said before, in compensation for the manner in which the family of the Raja had betrayed Tipu by their being drawn into intrigues with the British. The Emperor of Delhi was in the same position at the hands of Sindhia in which Tipu and his father had placed the Raja of Mysore. The Marquess Wellesley was now intriguing with him just in the same manner to betray Sindhia, as he had done with the family of the Raja of Mysore to betray Tipu. From the words italicised in the above extract, there is every reason to believe that the Mughal Emperor had been given to understand that at least a part of the Indian Empire would be restored to him. It was in this way that he appears to have been lured into the snares of the British and exchanged King Stork for King Log. It should not be forgotten that the Emperor and his successors felt themselves aggrieved at the treatment they received at the hands of the British. It was to represent their grievances that the descendant of the Delhi Emperor, Sháh Alam, deputed the great Raja Ram Mohan Roy to England.

Four decades afterwards, on for 18th December, 1848, the treaty entered into with the Emperor of Delhi was the subject of discussion at the East India House, under the chairmanship of Mr. J. Shepherd. That well-known orator, George Thompson, in pleading the cause of the Emperor referred to the claims which the illustrious Delhi "family had upon the justice and gratitude of the East India Company ...... All he asked for at the hands of the Court was good faith, a scrupulous observance of treaties, and the fulfilment of those engagements into which the Company or their servants in India had voluntarily entered."

Thompson "then detailed the occurrences which led the King of Delhi to place himself under the protection of the British and read the terms of the (alleged) treaty with Lord Lake, of 1803."

Thompson after referring to the letter of Lord Wellesley to the Delhi Emperor, extracts from which have already been given above, said :

"His Majesty, in a letter of the 5th October, 1803, addressed to Lord Wellesley, after congratulating him on the success of Lord Lake, claimed the fulfilment of the pledge contained in his lordship's letter; and on the 2nd of December, 1803, an *ikrar-namah*, or written agreement, was submitted by Lord Lake to the King."

Said the Chairman that

"The court would be surprised to hear that the document, which the hon. proprietor (Mr. Thompson) had called an *ikrar namah* was nowhere to be found on the records of the court, or n those of the Supreme Government of India; and there could be no doubt that no such document

had ever been finally recognized, for the Marquess Wellesley had especially directed, in his despatch of the 23rd May, 1805, that no written agreement should be entered into with the King of Delhi,... He (the Chairman) would admit that some memorandum on the subject might have been made by one party, but he denied that it could be considered as a treaty, or ought to be so considered."

On hearing this astounding statement of the Chairman, Mr. Sullivan rose and said :

"Having listened with attention to the answer (the best defence he supposed that could be made), he declared, that if he was upon his oath at this moment, as a juryman, as an arbitrator, or as a judge in equity, he would cast the Company in full damages; that is, he would sentence them to pay the whole proceeds of the assigned lands with the arrears, nay, he would go further; he would insist upon their making compensation for the lands which had been—he must not say, fraudulently, but—improperly alienated from the Mogul. What was the Chairman's answer to the hon. proprietor's (Mr. Thompson's) case ? He says, that the *ikrar namah* or agreement given by Lord Lake to Shah Alum, is not upon the Company's records; that they have no knowledge of it. What is that to the purpose ? The question was, is such a document in existence ? Did Lord Lake, the representative of the Governor-General, and armed with plenary power from him, give such a document to the Emperor ? If the present Emperor can produce this agreement, and prove that it was so given to his grandfather, what will the chairman say ? Was it the fault of Shah Alum that this document was not upon record ? . . . . . . In my judgment a gross breach of faith has been committed in this case of the Moghul, ..." (*Asiatic Journal,* January 1845, pp. 305-310).

It is evident, then, that the Delhi Emperor was deceived by Wellesley and his vile instrument, Lake, by specious promises and thus made to part with his ancestral rights and privileges.

Lake was also instructed to intrigue with Begam Samru, who had carved out a principality for herself at Sardhana.*

In his 'official and secret' letter, dated 28th July, 1803, to Lake, the Marquess Wellesley wrote :

"Your Excellency will be apprized by the 26th paragraph of my instructions to Mr. Mercer, of the arrangement which I propose to conclude with respect to the Jageer of Zeeboo Nissa Begum, commonly called Sumroo's Begum. The disposition of the Begum to place herself under the protection of the British Government is distinctly declared in two letters which I have lately received from her.

"I have stated in my instructions to Mr. Mercer that the local situation of the Begum's Jageer renders it desirable that in any engagement concluded with her on the part of the British Government, such conditions should be inserted as may facilitate the introduction of the British regulations into the Jageer and I request that your Excellency's negotiations with the Begum may be directed to the accomplishment of this object. . . . .

"As an immediate proof of her disposition to connect her interests with those of the British Government, and as the condition of her being admitted to the benefits of its protection, she should be required to recall her battalions now serving in the army of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, and to employ whatever influence she may possess over the zemindars and chieftains in the Dooab, to induce them to place themselves under the authority of the British Government and to employ their resources in assisting the operations of the British arms."

It is impossible to properly unravel the thread of intrigues which the Governor-

* An account of this remarkable woman will be found in the monograph on Begam Samru by Brajendra Nath Benerji.

General wove with all the feudatories and subjects of Sindhia. In his 'secret' letter to Lake, dated 30th July, 1803, the Marquess wrote :

"It is possible that some of the tributaries, principal officers, or other subjects of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, exclusively of those described in my general instructions to your Excellency, and in my instructions to Mr. Mercer, may be inclined to place themselves under the protection of the Company. The war in which we are involved by the aggression* of Scindhia, renders it both just and expedient, that we should avail ourselves as much as possible, of the discontents and disaffection of his subjects or officers, and I accordingly desire, that in all cases where overtures of this nature may be made to your Excellency, which may not admit of reference to me, you will be pleased to decide on the degree and nature of the encouragement, proper to be given to the persons by whom they may be made.

"I also authorize your Excellency to give to all tributaries or others renouncing their allegiance to Scindhia, and acting sincerely in our favour, the most positive assurances of effectual protection in the name of the Company. . . . .

"Your Excellency will observe from my general instructions, that it is my ultimate intention to extend the regulations of the British Government throughout the whole of the country, bounded by the rivers Ganges and Jumna, and by the mountains of Kumaon. A part of this territory is possessed by a race of inhabitants known by the designation of Goojurs, who are understood to be adverse to the authority of Dowlut Rao Sindhia and to have frequently been engaged in hostilities with that chieftain in the vicinity of Saharunpore.

"Your Excellency's prudence will dictate the expediency of employing the most efficacious measures for the purpose of conciliating the Goojurs, and of inducing them to unite with the British Government for the overthrow of Sindhia's power in the Dooab. An amicable arrangement may hereafter be concluded with the Goojurs, for the regulation of the conditions on which their possessions all be held subject to the paramount authority of the Honorable Company."

It should be remembered that at the time when the English, and especially their Governor-General, were busily engaged in intrigues against Sindhia, war had not been formally declared upon that Prince. The English and the Maratha Confederates were still supposed to be at peace with one another. Negotiations with the ostensible desire for peace were still being carried on between them. The proof of the genuineness of Sindhia's and the Raja of Berar's desire for peace is to be found in the dogged perseverance with which they clung to every chance of bringing the negotiations to a satisfactory issue and in order to ward off a war. But as has been already pointed out before, the English and especially General Wellesley who had been empowered to conclude peace or war with the Marathas would never put down in black and white the concessions which would satisfy them. They always confined themselves to vague generalities and never mentioned the minimum of what they would accept. The British tried to make out the Marathas as the delinquent party. No evidence has ever been brought forward to show that the Marathas were not desirous for peace. In the published despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, the only documents on which the sincerity and good faith of Dowlat Rao Sindhia could be impugned are the letter of Mr. Leycester and its two enclosures. Referring to these documents, Mr. Montgomery Martin, the editor of the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, writes that

* Where, and what was the nature of the aggression of Sindhia ? This existed only in the imagination of the Governor-General. What lies this nobleman could indulge in, when it suited his purpose to do so !

"They fully prove his Lordship's declaration to General Lake, that Scindhia's sole object was to gain time, and also the opinion of Colonel Collins."*

Mr. Leycester's letter, dated 26th July and its enclosures, to which reference will shortly be made, were not received by the Governor-General until the 15th of August, 1803, that is, a few days after hostilities had been actually undertaken against Sindhia. In his letter to the Governor-General, Mr. Leycester wrote :—

"In the present posture of affairs, I trust a zeal for the public welfare, and the anxiety I feel to render my small services of any the least benefit to a government from which I have received such distinguished countenance, will plead in palliation of the liberty I am taking in the present address and that if the intrusion be altogether unacceptable or unnecessary, the motive to it will screen me from the disapprobation of your Lordship."

After this prelude, he goes on to describe how certain letters alleged to have been written by Sindhia had been forwarded to him by one Bambu Khan. These letters were, it was alleged, addressed to Ghulam Muhammad Khan and Bambu Khan. It was a noteworthy fact that Sindhia's letters in original were not forwarded but copies of these only. There are strong grounds for suspecting that 'a zeal for the public welfare' prompted the Collector of Moradabad to encourage dependants of Sindhia not only to betray their master, but fabricate and forge documents to compromise him. Ghulam Muhammad Khan was a Rohilla chieftain, who had usurped the Government of Rampur and revolted against the Nawab Vazir of Oudh, but he was defeated by the British troops in 1794, and expelled from Rampur.

Bambu Khan was not a man of much importance. He was an adventurer who was trying to better his circumstances by fawning on and flattering the powers that were.† It passes our understanding that Sindhia should have addressed a man of so little consequence the letter, a copy of which was forwarded to Mr. Leycester. Another question arises how Bambu Khan came to possess the letter alleged to have been written by Sindhia to Ghulam Muhammad Khan. It is also probable that the British

* The Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, Vol. III, page 203.

† Bambu Khan bore a grudge against Dowlut Rao Sindhia, for the half-caste officer named John Baptiste Filose, in the employ of that Maratha prince, had, in the name of his master, defeated and deprived him of all his possessions in the Saharunpore District. Regarding this incident, Sir Michael Filose wrote in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for April, 1889 :

"He (John Baptiste Filose) was now a little over twelve years of age, . . one day, when La Fontaine with the officers under him presented themselves in Durbar, he was ordered by the Emperor to send part of his force against Bambu Khan, the contumacious Nawab of Saharunpore. Thereupon young Filose said that, if it were not considered presumption on his part, he would offer to lead the expedition, and thus show his capacity. ...

"At first La Fontaine was unwilling to entrust the boy with such service. But after reflecting for sometime on his ability and high promise, he took off his sword and gave it to John Baptiste, saying. "Take this, my son, as your commission, win or die." To render the young Commander's duty the easier, he gave him a strong force consisting of two regiments of infantry, four guns, and a body of cavalry. With these he set out against the Nawab Bambu Khan. His attack on Saharunpore was so spirited that after two hour's fighting Bambu Khan and his Afghans, though three times as numerous as Filose's force, fled from the Fort and escaped to the jungle. Filose took possession of the Fort, and ruled there for about two months."

Government of that day in India suspected the genuineness of these letters. These letters bore no date. In the official records, their translation appears under the heading :

"Translation of a paper *stated* to be the copy of a letter from Dowlut Rao Scindhia to Ghoolam Mahomed Khan*"

It was a noteworthy fact that Bambu Khan did not forward the letter in original which it was alleged he had received from Sindhia, and further alleged to have been the same as the one to Ghulam Muhammad Khan, excepting in parts not applicable to Bambu Khan's circumstances. Bambu Khan's letter to Mr. Leycester shows how desirous he was to court the favor of the English in order to improve his circumstances. He had every temptation to commit forgery, for he knew that that would please the British. At that time, the latter had set afoot a huge conspiracy against Sindhia. Bambu Khan would not have ventured to approach the English Collector and forwarded to him the letters alleged to have been written by Sindhia, had he not been sounded before and taken into the confidence of the British conspirators.

But, supposing that Sindhia had actually written the letters to Ghulam Muhammad Khan and Bambu Khan, copies of which the Collector forwarded to the Governor-General, should he be blamed for so doing ? As said before, the letters bear no date. But it is certain, that if genuine, they were written sometime in the middle of June, 1803. We should remember the events which were at that time being witnessed by Sindhia. He saw that the English were armed to the teeth, and that they were making strong attempts to alienate the loyalty of his feudatories and subjects. Many sinister signs were observed by him. The Resident at his Court, Colonel Collins, had deliberately insulted him and demanded his discharge. In his memorial, dated 12th June, 1803, to Sindhia, Collins wrote :

"Should the Maharaja decline giving colonel Collins the satisfaction which he now demands, in this case the Colonel requests that Maharaja Dowlut Rao Scindhia will furnish him with a party of horse to escort him as far as Aurangabad, together with supplies of grain sufficient for the subsistence of his sepoys and followers, until their arrival at that city."

This language of the Resident left no doubt in the mind of the Maratha Prince that the English having made every preparation for the war, were now desirous for war and not peace. From arguments already adduced before, it has been made evident that Sindhia was extremely solicitious for peace. But when he saw that war was inevitable, why should he be blamed for making the same preparations which the English had been doing for years previously ? Of course, he had strong grounds for calling the English of his day in India "*the unprincipled race.*"

The Marquess Wellesley wrote a secret letter, dated 22nd August, 1803, to Lake, at the same time transmitting to him a copy of Mr. Leycester's letter together with copies and translations of the Persian documents, to which the letter referred. The Governor-General wrote :

"It will be obvious to your Excellency that the public service may be essentially promoted by securing the attachment and exertions of Bumboo Khan in the present crisis of our affairs. I have

* Wellesley's Despatches, Vol. III, pp. 203-207.

therefore addressed a letter to that chieftain, signifying my disposition to accept his services, and to extend to him in return for his exertions, the protection and favor of the British Government. That letter accompanies this despatch, together with copies of it, for your Excellency's information.

* * * * * *

"I deem it to be proper, however, to suggest to your Excellency's consideration the expediency of encouraging Bumboo Khan to apprehend and to deliver the person of Gholam Mohummad Khan into the hands of the British power, or at least to prevent Gholam Mohummad from proceeding with the force whieh he may have collected either for the purpose of joining the army under General Perron, or of exciting disturbances in the territories of the Company or the Nabob Vizier. If your Excellency should be of opinion that the offer of a pecuniary reward is calculated to stimulate the exertions of Bumboo Khan for the accomplishment of either of those purposes, Your Excellency is at liberty to convey to him the offer of such a reward to any extent which your Excellency may deem proper."

Thus to the list of conspirators against Sindhia was added the name of one more man. What services this conspirator rendered to the English, and in what manner he was rewarded by them, are questions which from the very nature of things are not discussed in public documents.

At that time, the land of the Five Rivers was showing signs of military organisation. The Panjab has always played a most prominent part in the history of India. Every invader and foreign conqueror of India had necessarily to pass through the Panjab. Hence, the people had to bear the brunt of the attack of every ambitious foreign invader. They were consequently always a very sturdy race. But at the time of which we are taking note, the Sikhs were coming into existence as a martial people in India. At that time, in the person of Raja Ranjit Singh, the Sikhs possessed a leader who was coming into prominence by his distinguished military genius. He was totally illiterate. In this he resembled Hydar Ali more than Shivaji. The founder of the Maratha nation possessed many qualities of head and heart which Ranjit Singh lacked,

However, the Sikhs, at this critical period of Indian history, could have given much trouble to the British. They could have proved a disturbing factor in the political equation of the Governor-General. Ranjit Singh resembled Hydar Ali in being illiterate and also in throwing off the allegiance to his lawful master. Lahore had been brought under the subjugation of the King of Kabul. Ranjit Singh, as the Governor of Lahore, made himself independent of the Kabul Sovereign. Had he been a far-seeing statesman, or had there been any statesman among the Sikhs, the Marathas could have counted upon Ranjit Singh and the Sikhs for support. But unfortunately there never arose any statesman among the Sikhs. Hydar Ali, as said before, was not a great statesman. But Ranjit Singh did not approach even Hydar in statecraft.

However, the Marquess Wellesley thought that the Sikhs might give trouble, were they to come to the help of, or join, the Marathas. So he tried to conspire and enter into intrigues with them against Sindhia. In his secret and official letter, dated 2nd August 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lake:

"Your Excellency has anticipated my opinion with respect to the expediency of endeavouring to obtain the co-operation of the principal chiefs of the tribe of Sikhs, in the approaching contest with the Maratha power.

"The chiefs from whose influence or exertions the greatest benefit is to be derived, are the Raja of Putteeala and those petty chieftains who occupy the territory between Putteeala and the Jumna. I understand, however, that Raja Runjeet Singh, the Raja of Lahore, is considered to be the principal among the chiefs of the tribe of Sikhs, and to possess considerable influence over the whole body of the Sikh chiefs.

"In the year 1800 the Resident with Dowlut Rao Sindhia, by my direction, despatched a confidential agent to the principal chiefs, for the purpose of persuading them to unite in opposing the apprehended invasion of Zemaun Shah and of conciliating them to the interests of the British Government.

"Those chieftains manifested a disposition highly favorable to the British Government, until the receipt of letters from M. Perron, who succeeded in exciting their suspicions by false and malignant statements of the views and intentions of the British Government with respect to the Sikhs; . . . Since that period of time M. Perron has industriously cultivated the attachment of the Sikh chieftains, and has probably continued his endeavours to preserve in their minds the spirit of jealousy and mistrust which he had excited against the British Government. . . . . . .

"I transmit to Your Excellency, for the purpose of being forwarded, at such time and in such manner as may appear to your Excellency to be most proper, letters to those among the Sikh chiefs with whom the agent of the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia communicated. . . . .

"Adverting to the great distance of Lahore from the scene of intended operations, the only support to be expected from Raja Ranjit Singh, is the exertion of his influence with the other Sikh chieftains, to induce them to favor the cause of the British Government. . . . . .

"Such of those chieftains as are subject to the control and exactions of the Maratha power, may perhaps be detached from the interests of that nation by promises of protection from the British Government, and of exemption from the payment of tribute in future. . . . . .

"If it should appear impracticable to obtain the co-operation of those chieftains, it would still be an object of importance to secure their neutrality.

"In your communications to the Sikh chieftains it may be proper that Your Excellency should suggest to their consideration the danger to which they will hereafter be exposed by any opposition to the interests of the British Government, and the advantages which they may derive from a connection with so powerful a state. . . . . . .

"It is possible that, however well disposed those chieftains may be towards the British Government, they may be deterred from openly manifesting that dispositon, by their apprehension of M. Perron's resentment, until the operations of the British troops shall relieve them from that danger, and a premature disclosure of our intentions with respect to the Sikh chieftains may enable M. Perron to frustrate the object of these instructions. This consideration may require the observance of secrecy and caution in your Excellency's communications with those chieftains."

The letter from which so many extracts have been given above, is of great historical importance, as it throws a flood of light on the rise and progress of Ranjit Singh and the Sikh Power in the Punjab and serves to explain, what appears to many, the pusillanamimous conduct of Ranjit Singh towards the British. Towards the end of the eighteenth, and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Sikh power had not come into existence. But there were individual leaders with bands of Sikhs who spread terror and confusion by their plundering and marauding excursions. The author of the *Seir-ul-Mutakhrin* has given a very graphic account of the Sikhs of his times. He writes:

"The Sikhs formed a large body, who, from a fraternity of mendicants, had in his (Bahadur-Shah's) time become a formidable army, which plundered and desolated the whole province of Lahore. . . . .

"They (the Sikhs) spared no Mussalman, whether man, woman, or child; pregnant women

were ripped open, and their children dashed against their faces or against walls. The Emperor Bahadur Shah shuddered at hearing of such atrocious deeds; . . . . . On the accession of Ferokh-Siar, Islam-Khan, Viceroy of Lahore, received orders to destroy those free-booters; but he was totally defeated in a pitched battle, and after losing the greatest part of his men, he retired to Lahore covered with disgrace. Benda, elevated by so unexpected a success, recommenced his atrocities with additional fury."*

Of course, we should not lose sight of the fact that the author of the *Seir-ul-Mutakhrin* was a Muhammadan and as such was biassed against the Sikhs, since on his co-religionists the Sikhs retaliated for the persecutions they had been subjected to at their hands. Vengeance sleeps long, but it never dies. The followers of the Crescent, under the supremacy of the weak or degenerate Mughal Emperors, had badly persecuted the Sikhs. The latter were watching for opportunities to avenge on the Muhammadans the ill-treatment they had received at their hands. The Sikhs at the time when the Marquess Wellesley landed in India as Governor-General, were not reckoned as of any political importance. They were merely bands of marauders, robbers and free-booters. That soldier of fortune, George Thomas, who knew the Sikhs perfectly well, made in 1801 overtures to the Marquess Wellesley to conquer the Sikhs.†

But at that time the Marquess Wellesley was not in a position to countenance George Thomas's proposal and bring the Sikhs under the rule of the East India Company.§

Colonel James Tod, the author of the Annals of Rajasthan, writing of George Thomas's character in the pages of the *Asiatic Journal,* said :

"The Sikhs quailed before the name of Thomas, who spoke of them as soldiers with contempt, and treated them to hard knocks. With 500 of his Rohilla cavalry he would at any time have disposed of thrice that number of Sikh horse."**

But it cannot be denied that the Sikhs were a brave and war-like people. Had they thrown in their lot with the Marathas, they could have given much trouble to the British. We must give great credit to the Marquess Wellesley for his taking note of this fact, and therefore he set afoot intrigues and conspiracies with them against the Marathas. The rise of the Sikhs (and of Ranjit Singh in particular) was due to the encouragement they received at the hands of the English. While the latter were extirpating all the independent states of India, and reducing them to non-entities, they and their chief, the Marquess Wellesley, instead of acting on the advice of George Thomas, and instead of extending the provisions of his nefarious scheme of subsidiary alliance to the petty Sikh states and over the petty Sikh chieftains, considered it a matter of political expediency to encourage the Sikhs and raise them into a Power. Without the help of the English, the rise of the Sikhs and of Ranjit Singh would have been impossible. Those who consider the conduct of Ranjit Singh as pusillanimous for his never crossing swords with the British, or rather yielding to, and carrying out their demands, are not aware of the fact that his rise would have been impossible without

* Brigg's Translation, p. 60. (Allahabad reprint.)

† Compton's *European Military Adventurers of Hindustan,* pp. 173-174.

§ *Ibid.,* p. 174.

** *Ibid.,* p. 216,

their help and encouragement. It was out of a sense of gratitude, which forms such a marked trait in the character of all Asiatic nations, that Ranjit always yielded to their demands, and carried out their wishes.

So by the bait held out to the Sikhs it was not difficult for the British to ensnare them and secure their neutrality, if not co-operation.

But the neutrality or co-operation of the Sikhs would not have affected Sindhia's interests so much as the success which attended the intrigues and conspiracies of the English with Sindhia's officers and men. It has been already mentioned before that acting on the advice of Warren Hastings, Madhoji Sindhia had entertained the services of European officers, mostly of the French nationality, to train his men in the European system of warfare. This was a most suicidal policy to be adopted by any Indian Power. Madhoji's successor was now to pay the penalty for his folly.

It will be remembered that at the Cape of Good Hope, when the Marquess Wellesley (at that time Earl of Mornington) had an opportunity of discussing the political affairs of India with Major Kirkpatrick (the late Resident at the Court of Hydarabad), the latter among other questions asked :

"What measures now appear to you to be the best adapted to the object of inducing the Nizam to disband this (French) corps !"

Major Kirkpatrick suggested four modes of proceeding ; one of these was :

"By holding out suitable inducements to the European and principal native officers, as well as to the European Sergeants of the corps to quit it, and retire into the Company's dominions : a measure which, if tolerably successful, would necessarily either bring about the entire dissolution of it, or at least, reduce it to a state of comparative insignificance."

The Governor-General now acted on this suggestion as regards the European military adventurers in the service of Sindhia. M. Perron, a Frenchman of very low origin, had succeeded De Boigne as Commander-in-Chief of Sindhia's troops. It should be remembered that these Europeans were mere mercenaries. Gold was their god. They were not inspired by patriotism or any sense of honor in serving a non-Christian prince. The sole object with these mercenaries was to amass fortunes as quickly and as easily as possible. So it was not difficult to buy them over. The Marquess Wellesley issued a proclamation holding out pecuniary rewards to all the European mercenaries to desert the service of Sindhia. And he succeeded beyond his expectations. All the adventurers without the least scruple of conscience, if they ever possessed any, deserted the prince whose salt they had eaten for so many years and whom they had plighted their faith to loyally serve. But the sight, or rather the promise of gold, made them abjure their faith.

It would have been proper for Sindhia when he saw that the war was inevitable, to take steps to prevent the foreign mercenaries in his employ from deserting him, or, failing in that, to shoot or hang them. Every received principle of the law of nations sanctions this mode of procedure. But we should remember that Sindhia was an Asiatic and a Hindu. He could not conceive how the Christians in his service, who had been so well treated and honored, would desert him in his hour of need. He was not sufficiently well acquainted with the character of these foreigners. Even if he was, he

did not like to stain his hands with their blood. "Judgment belongeth to Lord God" and he left Him to deal with the traitors in his camp. Unfortunately for him, he was not versed in the school of politics prevailing in all European countries since the days of Machiavelli.

This desertion of the foreign mercenaries was most fatal to Sindhia.

We have now tried to disentangle the web of conspiracies and intrigues which the Governor-General wove round Sindhia. We have soley depended for our information on the records of the English themselves. These show to what lengths the English of that period could go in their campaign of intrigues and conspiracies. No historian has as yet fully traced the ramifications of these conspiracies.

CHAPTER XXVI.

COMMENCEMENT AND PROGRESS OF THE WAR

THE BATTLE OF ASSAYE

The Marquess Wellesley had delegated the power of negotiating for peace with, or levying war against the Maratha Confederates to his brother Major-General Wellesley. The Commander-in-Chief, General Lake, was employed in the task of setting afoot intrigues, conspiracies and plots against Sindhia in northern India. But in the event of the declaration of war by General Wellesley, the Commander-in-Chief was also to prosecute hostilities with vigor and energy. It was on the 6th August, 1803, that General Wellesley at last declared war on the Maratha Confederates. In those days, railways and telegraphs had not come into existence. So it took several days before the Governor-General or the Commander-in-Chief knew anything of the doings of General Wellesley in the South.

General Wellesley had already set out from Puna and was within two days' march of Ahmadnagar. Ahmadnagar possessed a very strong fortress built by the Nizam-Shahi rulers. It was not an easy thing to capture this fortress by assault. It could have stood a siege for an indefinite length of time. The possession of Ahmadnagar was rightly considered to be of great importance, since this would have the effect of demoralizing Sindhia's subjects. General Wellesley was intriguing and conspiring with Sindhia's men in charge of the Ahmadnagar Fort or City. On the 7th August, he marched to and encamped near the vicinity of Ahmadnagar, when he issued the following proclamation. :

"Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the Raja of Berar having threatened with hostililies the British Government and their allies,* Rao Pundit Purdhaun and the Nabob, Nizam Ali, and in pursuance of those threats having advanced with their large armies to a position contiguous to the frontiers, and having refused to depart from it, notwithstanding the repeated representations and entreaties of Major-General Wellesley, as the only mode of preserving peace, he at last finds himself obliged to commence hostilities against those chiefs.

"He does not, however, intended to war upon the inhabitants; and, accordingly, all amildars and others are required to remain quietly in their stations, and obey the orders they will receive; and if they do no injury to the British Armies, none will be done to them. But notice is hereby given, that if any of the inhabitants of the country either abandon their dwellings or do any injury to the British Armies or their followers they will be treated as enemies and suffer accordingly."

This proclamation produced the desired effect. The English were not coming as conquerors but as friends. At least so they pretended to be. Moreover, the subjects of Sindhia were not prepared to offer resistance, since their master never received any ultimatum from the British, with whom he was sincerely desirous of maintaining peace.

* It is not stated, when and in what manner, these chiefs had threatened with hostilities, the British Government and their allies. This was a fabrication of the English.

On the 8th, General Wellesley encamped at Ahmadnagar. He summoned the Killedar or the keeper of the Fort to surrender. He made a very feeble resistance. There was some desultory fighting for two or three days. On the 11th August, 1803, the Killedar surrendered the fort, "on condition that he should be allowed to depart with his garrison, and that he should have his private property." General Wellesley consented to this proposal and the Killedar handed over the fort with the guardianship of which he had been entrusted.*

In his dispatches, General Wellesley wrote that "the fort was then in excellent repair." But it was not convenient for him to mention by what foul means he came to possess it. The following extract from the Ahmadnagar Gazetteer, edited by Sir James Campbell, needs no comment:

"When after capturing the town General Wellesley reconnoitred the fort on the 9th August the complete protection which the glacis afforded to the wall made it difficult to fix on a spot for bombardment. Raghurao Baba, the Deshmukh of Bhingar, received a bribe of £400 (Rs. 4000) and advised an attack on the east face."†

On the 13th, he issued the following proclamation, which as usual abounded with lies:

"Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the Raja of Berar having manifested an intention of attacking the British Government and its allies, ... Major-General Wellesley, as a measure of defence, has attacked the fort of Ahmednagar, and his brave troops have got possession of it.

"He has appointed Captain Graham to take charge . . . . . . of all the territories belonging to Dowlut Rao Scindhia, depending upon that fort, and he calls upon all amildars and others to attend to and obey his orders, and those of no other persons at their peril. Captain Graham will be at Ahmednagar."

He stayed in Ahmadnagar for some days to settle the place and bring its inhabitants under the spell of English influence.

At this stage it will be necessary to take note of the several divisions of the troops under the leadership of British officers.

In the south, under the command of General Wellesley, there was a very large force, with which he marched on to Ahmadnagar. Colonel Stevenson had also a large army and was now encamping in the vicinity of Aurangabad. The whole of the Nizam's subsidiary force, augmented also by his own troops, had been placed under the command of Colonel Stevenson.

But the Commander-in-Chief of Madras was in the field with a very large army under his command. General Stuart was on the frontier of Mysore, ordered to watch the course of events and render such assistance to Major-General Wellesley as the latter might stand in need of. But the real and secret object of his presence with the large army on the frontier of Mysore was:

"for the purposes of covering the frontier, and ensuring the internal tranquility of Mysore and the ceded districts, *of overawing the Southern Maratha jaghiredars,* of supporting the British interests at

* The letter of General Wellesley to the Governor-General, dated Ahmadnagar, 12th August, 1803, shows also the advantanges of holding the Ahmadnagar Fort.

† P. 695.

Hyderabad, and affording every practicable degree of security to the communication with Major-General Wellesley's army."

These are the words of General Stuart himself, quoted from his despatch to the Governor-General, dated 8th August, 1803. The words put in italics require a passing reference. At the time of the restoration of the Peshwa it was given out by the British that the southern Maratha Jagirdars were particularly anxious to co-operate with them in effecting the restoration of the Peshwa. Had such been the case, why was it found necessary to 'overawe' them with the presence of a large army on their frontier?

Sindhia possessed some territories in Guzerat, dependent on the fort of Baroach. General Wellesley entrusted the Resident with the Guicowar to commence operations in Guzerat against Sindhia's possessions by the siege of Baroach.

The Raja of Berar was master of a very large tract of country on the eastern coast of India, known as the province of Kattack. This province was to be usurped by the British. How this was to be effected by means of plots and intrigues against the Raja of Berar was pointed out to Lieut.-Colonel Campbell by the Marquess Wellesley, in the letter dated August 3rd, 1803. Lieut.-Colonel Campbell was commanding the Northern Division of the Madras Army at Ganjam. The Governor-General wrote to him:

"You have been informed that a force will be detached from Bengal to act under your command, together with the force which you may be enabled to collect from the Northern Circars, in consequence of the orders signified to you by my Military Secretary. The force from Bengal will embark in the course of a day or two, and I have directed return of it to accompany these instructions."

Then follow several paragraphs containing instructions as to the manner in which Lieut.-Colonel Campbell should enter into intrigues with the feudatories and subjects of the Raja of Berar.

Thus the number of armies which the English brought into the field to operate against Sindhia and the Raja of Berar amounted to six, viz., the one on the Mysore Frontier under Lieut.-General Stuart, that under Major-General Wellesley, the Nizam's troops under Colonel Stevenson, the main army of northern India under General Lake, the troops in the northern division of the Madras Presidency under Colonel Campbell, and, lastly, the force employed in Guzerat to reduce Baroach and capture other possessions of Sindhia in that country.

But it was General Wellesley and General Lake who had to fight almost all the principal battles with which this Second Maratha War is associated.

It has been stated above that General Wellesley encamped at Ahmadnagar for a few days after its fall. He had taken possession of the country dependent on the Ahmadnagar Fort in the name of the Company and the Peshwa. The Peshwa was naturally anxious that his men should be appointed to manage the affairs of the conquered territory. But such was not the intention of General Wellesley. He wanted to keep the Peshwa quiet with smooth and specious, although false, promises: because he did not wish that the Peshwa should have any share in the territories,

which would be wrested from Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. On the 13th August, 1803, he wrote to Colonel Close, Resident at Puna:

"I am very anxious that the Peishwa should feel no jealousy about this place. I have, however, taken possession of it in the names of the Company and the Peishwa, and I shall take possession of the country in the same manner. I intend to appoint Captain Graham to manage the latter. I wish that you would speak to Ragonath Rao (*i.e.* the Peishwa Baji Rao, son of Ragonath Rao) upon this subject, point out to him how necessary the place is for us, and that the country should be kept quiet by means of the management of a gentleman in the Company's Service. You may also assure him that a faithful account shall be kept of the revenues, and credit given to the Peishwa for his proportion of them."

But on the following day, the General changed his mind. On the 14th August, 1803, he wrote to Colonel Close:

"Since writing to you yesterday, it has occurred to me that it would be better not to hold out to the Peishwa any promise or prospect of having half the revenue of Ahmednagar, but to tell him generally that the revenues shall be applied to pay the expenses of the war, and that the accounts of them shall be communicated to him. One great object, however, is to reconcile his mind to our keeping possession of the country, which is absolutely necessary for our communications with Poona; and provided that is effected, I think it immaterial whether he has half the revenues or not.

* * *

"I beg you to turn this subject over in your mind, and to act in conformity to the sentiments I have above expressed. I will delay to write you a public letter upon it till I shall receive your answer."

The perfidious General was going to deceive the Peshwa in the same manner as his predecessors had treated "Omichand." The British were afraid that the Peshwa and the Southern Maratha jagirdars might seize the opportunity and declare hostilities against them. Hence their solicitude and trouble to keep them quiet with smooth and false promises. On the 17th August, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Colonel Close:

"If Ragonath Rao (*sic* the Peishwa Baji Rao) should be satisfied with a general assurance that the conquered territory is to be applied to the benefit of the allies, it will be most convenient, as that assurance leaves the question open for future discussion, and for a decision* according to the circumstances of the war.

"But I consider it to be an object of the utmost importance that the Peishwa's mind should be

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* Yes, after the war, the same Christian General expressed his opinion, that the Peshwa should have no share in the conquered territory.

In his letter dated 11th November, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to the Governor-General: "As well as I can recollect the treaty of Bassein, the Peishwa has no claim to participate in conquests; and if he had under the treaty, his breach of all its stipulations would free your Excellency from the necessity of giving him anything. However, your Excellency may deem it proper that he should enjoy some of the advantages retulting from the war, and *the cession of his territories in the Surat Attavesy would be full satisfaction for all his claims.* But before this territory should be ceded to His Highness the Peishwa, he ought to be required to consent to the improvements of the defensive alliance which I have above recommended should be required from His Highness the Soubah of the Deccan.

"I am of opinion that the fortress of Ahmednagar ought to be kept in the hands of the British Government until all these arrangements shall have been completed, and your Excellency shall see in what manner the defensive alliances will work."

satisfied as far as possible, in order that there may appear no wavering in his intention to adhere to the alliance on which the Southern jaghiredars might found acts of hostility against the Company."

From the despatches of General Wellesley it would seem that the Peshwa had been chafing under the chain riveted round his neck by the British, and it was thought possible that he might leave Puna or declare hostilities against them. It was therefore found necessary to keep the Peshwa quiet by means of smooth although false promises. Writing to Major Shawe on the 24th August, 1803, General Wellesley said:

"I have no idea that the Peishwa will attempt to fly from Poona; that if he should be so inclined, he could carry his plan into execution without the knowledge of his ministers. You will have observed from my letters to Colonel Close, that I have urged him to pay the ministers, in order to have accurate information of what passes."*

"We cannot contrive to settle the Government at Poona till the conclusion of the War. Bad as the situation of the Government is, it must be allowed to continue. If we were to attempt to alter it now, we should have a contest in our rear, which would be ruinous."

So then the philanthropical motives of the British, of which they never ceased boasting, in effecting the re-instatement of the Peshwa Baji Rao are quite apparent. They restored him to his *masnad* in order to create confusion and disorder and entered into intrigues with his ministers by bribing and corrupting them with the sole object of bringing more territories under their power.

Let us now follow the progress of General Wellesley. He remained encamped for several days at Ahmadnagar, occupied in making arrangements for the security of the fort, marched out of Ahmadnagar on the 18th and crossed the Godavery on the 24th August with the intention of proceeding to Aurangabad and joining Colonel Stevenson, who was in command of the Nizam's force.

When the Maratha Confederates heard of the treacherous act of the British in capturing the fort of Ahmadnagar, they also marched out of their encampment and entered the Nizam's territories. They hurriedly prepared for the war which was now inevitable. They were laboring under many disadvantages. The war was forced on them, and their enemy had been preparing for it since many years past, who had even raised traitors in their camp. Taking all these facts into consideration, it speaks very highly of Sindhia's military training that he should have so ably handled his troops that had remained faithful to him. His age at the time of this great crisis was only twenty-

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* There can be no doubt that the ministers of the Peshwa were tempted with bribes to betray *their master. Writing to Lieut.-Colonel Close*, Resident at Puna, from Camp at Assye on the 28th September, 1803, General Wellesley said :—"Lord Wellesley has taken up the question of paying the Peishwa's ministers upon a great scale.

* * * * *

"The Peishwa has no ministers. He is everything himself, and everything is little. In my opinion therefore, we ought to pay those who are supposed to be and are called his ministers, *not to keep the machine of government in motion, in consistence with the objects of the alliance as we do at Hyderabad,* but to have intelligence of what passes in the Peishwa's secret councils in order that we may check him in time when it may be necessary."

From the words put in italics it is clear that the real motive for corrupting the Peshwa's ministers was to create confusion and disorder in his dominions.

three. His foresight of a statesman and his high military skill should evoke our admiration. The fact of his failure does not detract from his merits.

Unfortunately, the movements of the Confederate Maratha chiefs were not kept so secret as those of their adversaries, for the very simple reason that there were 'spies and traitors in their camp who were in the pay of the British.* Their movements having been known, it was the easiest thing possible for the British to attack them under circumstances not favorable to the Confederates.

The great battle of Assaye, so memorable in the history of India, and which has been described as a 'decisive' one, for it secured the establishment of the supremacy of the British on a sound foundation, was fought on the 23rd September, 1803. It was fought under every circumstance unfavourable to Sindhia. The British chose their own ground of action. Dowlat Rao Sindhia was not present at Assaye on the day of the fight. His object was to march on Hydarabad and with this aim in view he had with his cavalry moved ahead of his infantry and artillery. On the morning of the 23rd, intelligence of the encampment of Sindhia's infantry and artillery at the village of Assaye was brought to General Wellesley. Had Dowlat Rao Sindhia been present with his cavalry and chosen troops at Assaye on that fatal day of 23rd September, it is not improbable that the history of India would have been differently written.

The despatch of General Wellesley, dated Camp at Assaye, 24th September, 1803, to the Governor-General and the Memorandum on the Battle of Assaye, subsequently transmitted, should be consulted by those who are interested in the military aspect of that event.

That Sindhia's men should have fought so bravely as to exact the admiration of their enemy shows of what metal they were made. Under proper and loyal leaders they would have been quite invincible. It should be remembered that the officers in command of the corps of Sindhia's infantry and artillery were mostly Europeans. As said previously, they were all perfidious and traitors. Some of them had deserted Sindhia at the time when the Governor-General was making warlike preparations and trying to take the Maratha Confederates unawares. It is to be feared that the other European officers, although in the service of Sindhia, were really in the pay of the British and did not scruple to betray their master. It would be impossible to account for the defeat of Sindhia on any other reasonable ground. General Wellesley's plan of operations, it is admitted on all hands, was not well conceived. That with his badly conceived manouvrès and movements, he should have succeeded in inflicting such a

* General Wellesley in his memorandum on the Battle of Assaye wrote: "We cannot send out natives in the Company's service, who, from long habit, might be able to give an accurate account, because they, being inhabitants of the Carnatic, or Mysore, are as well known in this part of the country as if they were Europeans; . . . . The consequence is, that we are obliged to employ, as hircarrahs (spies), the natives of the country, and to trust to their reports."

These 'natives of the country' were subjects of Sindhia. The British bribed them to betray their master and with their help, traitors were raised in the camp of Sindhia. That the British could bribe 'natives of the country' to betray their own Indian rulers, shows national degeneracy and lack of patriotism.

crushing defeat on the Maratha Confederates, would remain a mystery unless we supposed that there were traitors in the camp of Sindhia who betrayed their master's interests.

Sindhia had now to rue for the blunders of his predecessors. Mahadji was not a statesman with the gift of foresight and forethought. His military organization was a faulty one and showed ,lack of statesmanship. Warren Hastings came to an understanding with Mahadji and furnished him with European officers. That Governor-General knew that this 'gift of the Greeks' would compass the ruin of Sindhia. And he was not mistaken.

If Mahadji Sindhia had so great an admiration for the discipline and drill of European officers and soldiers, the proper thing for him would have been to establish a military school for the training of his subjects in European arts of warfare. Instead of doing this, he filled all the high posts in his army by employing Europeans who were all adventurers and men of no character. This was a blunder for which his successor had to pay a very heavy penalty.

The great Machiavelli, in his "Art of War," has truly observed that

"no wise ruler of states ever doubted but that a country should be defended by its own inhabitants. Had the Venetians comprehended all this they would have established a new empire of the world. In fact, by sea they fought with their own men, and were always victorious; on land they employed mercenary Captains and hireling soldiers; and then had not a leg left them to stand upon. The Romans on the other hand were far wiser, and being at first only practised in fighting on land, when they were opposed at Sea by the Carthaginians, speedily trained their people to naval conflicts and became equally succcssful."

Mahadji Sindhia should have acted on the above quoted principle of Machiavelli.

But it was not only the entertainment of Europeans which is to be so much deplored as the revolution that Mahadji had prematurely brought about in the Maratha tactics of warfare. His substitution of "the old lamp for the new one" of the Europeans was fatal for the Marathas. Such was the opinion even of the British military officers and statesmen. In the course of his letter to Major Shawe, dated 18th November, 1803, General Wellesley wrote :

"Scindhia's armies had acually been brought to a very favorable state of discipline, and his power had become formidable by the exertions of the European officers in his service; but I think t is much to be doubted, whether his power or rather that of the Maratha nation, would not have been more formidable, at least to the British Government, if they had never had an European, as an infantry soldier, in their service; and had carried on their operations, in the manner of the original Marathas, only by means of Cavalry.

"I have no doubt whatever but that the military spirit of the nation has been destroyed by their establishment of infantry and artillery, possibly, indeed, by other causes; at all events, it is certain that those establishments, however formidable, afford us a good object of attack in a war with the Marathas, and that the destruction of them contributes to the success of the contest."

Of course, it is impossible for us to share this opinion of General Wellesley. The mistake did not consist in having European arms of precision and raising corps of infantry and artillery on the model of European States, but in entertaining European officers who were not true to their salt but seized every opportunity to betray their masters. It was this mistake of the Marathas which contributed to the success of the British

Turning to the battle of Assaye, we have already expressed our opinion that the treachery of the European officers in Sindhia's employ accounts for his defeat. That Sindhia's artillery and infantry were excellent, is borne testimony to by General Wellesley himself. On the 3rd October, 1803, the latter wrote to his brother, Hon'ble H. Wellesley, that

"Scindhia's French infantry were far better than Tippoo's, his artillery excellent, and his ordnance so good and so well equipped, that it answers for our service. We never could use Tippoo's."

Having such infantry, artillery and ordnance, it is impossible to explain the defeat of Sindhia, except on the hypothesis of treachery of his European officers. At the battle of Assaye, according to the statistics of the British themselves, the loss in the killed, wounded and missing of the detachment under the command of General Wellesley was very great. If we believe in their statement that Sindhia's army at Assaye was four or five times larger than that under the command of General Wellesley, then the loss of the Marathas according to the figures given by the British themselves, was proportionately not so great as theirs.* It is impossible therefore to understand how and why so much of ordnance and pieces of cannon should fall into the hands of General Wellesley's force. Why should Sindhia's army leave the battle-field at all and that also in confusion and disorder, when they had still in their possession plenty of ammunition and cannon and other appliances requisite for war? It is also singular that not a single European officer and man in the service of Sindhia was killed or wounded at the battle of Assaye. From all these facts we are obliged to conclude that the defeat was due to treachery on the part of Sindhia's European officers and men.

It is true that in the official despatches of the British the victory gained by General Wellesley at Assaye has not been attributed to the treachery of Sindhia's European

* From the despatches of the Duke of Wellington we learn that at the battle of Assaye, he had under his command 8,000 men, 1,600 cavalry, and 17 guns. Whereas, according to the account of the British Scindhia had 50,000 men and 128 guns.

From the return of the Killed, Wounded and Missing of the Detachment of the Army under the Command of Major-General Wellesley at the battle of Assaye, it appears that the loss of the British was by no means a light one. Among their officers and soldiers, 164 were killed, 411 wounded and 8 were missing. Among the non-Christian sepoys 245 were killed, and 1211 wounded and 18 were missing.

There is no reliable statistics of Sindhia's loss. But dating his letter from Camp, 28th September 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Shawe: "It is said that they (the Marathas) lost one thousand two hundred men killed; the wounded and dying are scattered throughout the country in all directions. *I give you the hircarrah reports. God knows whether they are true, but I believe they are.*" From the words put in italics, it will be noticed that General Wellesley was not sure about the loss of the enemy which his spies had reported to him. But supposing that the reports were true, it is clear that Sindhia did not, proportionately to his large army, lose so many men in killed and wounded as the British.

It is also a very significant fact, that the British did not make any prisoners. It is probable that out of 1200 said to have been left dead on the battle-field, many were wounded to whom the British gave no quarter and showed no mercy but despatched in order to swell the number of the dead of the enemy.

officers. But it would not have done for them to mention it. However, some of General Wellesley's letters throw a curious sidelight on this subject. Dating his letter from Camp at Ferdapoor, 23rd October, 1803, he wrote to Colonel Murray:

"I learn from Colonel Stevenson, that the beaten infantry has gone that way from Asirghar, sixteen of their European officers and sergeants have come over to the Colonel, and he says that they are entirely ruined by the battle of the 23rd of September, and never can be formed into corps again."

Then General Wellesley expressed his great satisfaction at the miserable plight to which Sindhia's brigades were reduced, for he wrote:

"at all events their European officers have left them."

Reading all these despatches between the lines, there can be doubt that the victory of the British at the battle of Assaye was purchased by bribing the Europeans in the service of Sindhia. So no one need feel amazed that the troops, so well drilled and well armed as Sindhia's, should have been incapable of facing the enemy and left the battle-field in confusion and disorder, and without even trying to take with them or destroy the large number of cannon and vast quantity of ordnance which fell into the hands of their foreign adversaries.

That there were traitors in the camp of Sindhia and that the disaster which befell him at Assaye was due to the treachery of the European officers and men in his employ would be evident when we remember the composition of his force. On the 26th October, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Shawe, that

"Sydenham's account of Sindhia's force is tolerably correct. We understand, however, that Pohlman's brigade of eight battalions was called the 1st, which was destroyed on the 23rd of September: the two other brigades in that action are not accounted for by Sydenham: they were four battalions of Begum Sumroo, and four battalions of Dupont."

The two brigades in that action of Assaye, not accounted for by Sydenham, were in all probability the very brigades which betrayed Sindhia and were the means of inflicting defeat on him, since it seems a secret understanding existed between their commanders and the Governor-General and his brothers. Dupont was bought over as, reported by General Wellesley to the Governor-General.*

Regarding Begam Samru's brigade, we should remember the intrigue the British had entered into with her. Lake, in his Memorandum, submitted to the Governor-General on the 18th July, 1803, suggested that

"the most essential advantages may be derived from an union with Begum Sumroo, who has long evinced a desire to be taken under the protection of the English. . . . . . .

* On the 24th October, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to the Marquess Wellesley: "Sixteen officers and Sergeants belonging to the Campoos (*i. e.* Sindhia's Camp) have joined Colonel Stevenson under your Excellency's proclamation of the 29th August. I will hereafter send a list of their names, and an account of the pay each is to receive." Among these officers was Dupont. t seems clear then that he betrayed Sindhia at Assaye and hence was to receive the "pay" mentioned in His Excellency's proclamation of the 29th August, 1803. Otherwise had he loyally served Sindhia, and been defeated and taken prisoner at Assaye, he would not have been entitled to receive any "pay" or marked consideration at the hands of the Governor-General

"Four of her battalions are now with Sindhia, which may prove an obstacle to an early declaration of her sentiments, but if a rupture actually takes place, and she is sincere in what she has often declared, *means might be contrived to enable those battalions to join General Wellesley.*"

Upon this suggestion, the Gevernor-General observed:

"This suggestion is extremely proper, and orders will be immediately sent to Colonel Scott; Mr. Mercer's instructions include this point."

It is clear that the English intrigued with Begam Sumroo to corrupt her men, and means were contrived to enable her battalions to betray Sindhia. These battalions were present at Assaye, and it would not be taxing one's imagination or intelligence too much to understand that at Assaye these battalions played into the hands of General Wellesley and contributed to his success on that battle-field.

In his "History of the Marathas." Grant-Duff writes :

"Most of Sindhia's battalions (at Assaye) laboured under disadvantages by the cessation of the British part of their European officers, who, in consequence of a proclamation by the British Government, quitted the Marathas at the breaking out of the war. This proclamation was addressed to all British subjects, native as well as European, offering them the same pay which they enjoyed with Scindhia. It was judiciously extended to all Europeans, and in regard to the British officers was equally humane and politic."*

Of course, some deserted Sindhia at the commencement of the war, while others remained with him to play traitors in his camp.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FIELD OF ASSAYE

In the *Pioneer* of the 9th January, 1899, an officer signing his name as R. B. gave the following description of the battle-field of Assaye:

Assaye is situated in a remote corner of the dominions of His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, near to where the northern boundary of his territory abuts on the assigned province of Berar and the Khandeish district of the Bombay Presidency. It is situated some thirty miles north of Jalna.

The little known parts of the Deccan, that is, little known to those who have not the fortune to have their lot cast in such remote spots, abound in places of historic interest. Assaye, Argaum, Gawilgarh—what stirring memories do these recall for those who have studied the Wellington Despatches. Of these, Assaye is the most important, for on that field Sir Arthur Wellesley commenced the work which he completed a few months later at Argaum, where the hosts of Scindhia were finally defeated.

Between Jalna and Assaye lies a dreary tract of arid grass land interpersed with patches of cultivation, which become more frequent in the valleys of the rivers that intersect the country at frequent intervals. The principal of these rivers is the Purna, six miles south of the battle-field, on both banks of which is built the village of Nalni, whence the British General advanced with his small force on that memorable September morning.

* P. 574.

It was around the village of Assaye itself that the hottest of the fight took place. Here the enemy's infantry clustered, whilst a hundred guns thundered from their midst. Here took place the famous bayonet charge of the 74th, in which that gallant regiment maintained the reputation that it had already won, and has since confirmed on many a field. Here, too, the brave Maxwell, slain in the hour of victory, charged at the head of the 19th and Native Cavalry, and secured the defeat which the bayonets of the 78th turned into a rout. From Assaye the scattered remnants of the Mahratta army, which had been drawn up so proudly confident of victory in the morning, fled before nightfall, leaving on the field 2,000 dead, and all their heavy ordnance and many standards as trophies to the victors.

There is nothing now remarkable to indicate the field of battle. The village of Assaye is a type of all these Deccan villages—a quiet, sleepy hamlet, composed of squalid habitations standing amid the mouldering ruins of the mud fort, an edifice inseparable from all villages in this part of the world. One wonders where the dead were buried. Where lie the 428 gallant souls who fell on the field of battle? Nothing is there to mark the place of sepulchre. No monument indicates where gallant Maxwell sleeps the sleep of the brave; or where rest the remains of Mackay, the Captain of Madras Cavalry who, in direct contravention of orders, for he was employed on the baggage staff, joined in the battle, and there met his death. It is related by Colonel Welsh in his *Military Reminiscences*, that "when in the very heat of action, news was brought to the General that Captain Mackay was killed his countenance changed, and a tear which fell upon his cheek was nature's involuntary homage to a kindred spirit."

No sign of battle now in this peaceful hamlet, slumbering in the December sun on the bank of the Juah river! But the villagers will produce mementoes in the shape of bullets of lead and rusty iron that are frequently turned up when they are tilling the soil.

R. B.

Commenting on the above, Colonel G. Carlton, Retired Royal Artillery, sent the following communication, which was published in that Anglo-Indian daily on the 3rd March, 1899:

THE FIELD OF ASSAYE.

To The Editor.

Sir, In the *Pioneer* of the 9th of January, which was kindly sent me by last India post, there is an interesting account of a visit to the village and field of battle of Assaye (spelt Assye in the Wellington despatches, and so pronounced by the natives). Perhaps you may think a few notes of a visit to the same historic field thirty-six years ago of sufficient interest to entitle them to a kind reception by the *Pioneer*. I started with another officer of my battery from Jalna so as to arrive at Assaye on the 23rd September, the anniversary of the battle, our object in so timing ourselves, was to see what the depth of water would be at the ford across the Kaitna, as the same might be assumed as its depth when our infantry forded the river in 1803. There had been some heavy rain two days before our arrival, but I found that mounted on an Arab horse 14-2 in height, I was able by raising my feet well up behind to get across the 70 yards or so of water without wetting my boots. We put up for the night in the verandah of the native rest-house or chaultry outside the village, which was filled, the natives of the place said, with our wounded after the great battle. Next day we found two old villagers who said they were boys when the battle was fought and that they were the only two still alive in the village who were living there then; they were, I should say, about seventy years of age. In reply to our questions about the Mahratta army and the comparatively little use made of their artillery, they gave an explanation that was quite new to us, and possibly true to some extent, *viz.*, that for some weeks (I think three) before the battle the Mahratta feast of the Dusserah had been going on (it is, if I remember right, a ten day's orgie) and this had delayed their army so long in camp that the forage in the immediate

neighbourhood had been exhausted and the artillery bullocks (all guns were formerly in India drawn by bullocks) had to be sent a long way off to graze, so when "Wesley Sahib Bahadur" came down on them so suddenly the gun bullocks could not be all got back in time to move the guns into the new position that was taken up by the enemy, and such guns as were got into action had to be dragged by sepoys. Both these old fellows told us they remembered seeing "Wesley Sahib." They described him as a man with a small head, and broad shoulders, moving their hands to their heads and shoulders significantly. They also said he could not speak any Hindustani. They expressed great admiration for the strict discipline (*bundobust*) "Wesley Sahib" had in his army, contrasting it with the bad conduct of Scindhia's troops. Your recent correspondent found no trace of the graves of those who fell in action on our side. I remember seeing the grave of Colonel Maxwell; it was marked by a flat slab raised off the ground and his name was cut on it. There were a few others near it, but in a more broken down state, no inscriptions legible. All were under a clump of trees, mango or banyan trees, situated a short distance beyond the village of Assaye, and I think near the steep bank of the Inah ravine. Major-General Wellesley, just thirty-four years old when he gained this great victory, in a letter written next day to Major Shawe explains the necessity he unexpectedly was under, when he discovered the enemy's position, to engage him some distance further to his own right, and he says; "For a length of time they did not see my infantry, or discover my design." Upon his personal reconnaissance he had, acting upon the "quick and sure vision" that Napier speaks of as a gift possessed by him in eminent degree, came to the bold decision to move his whole force, though within tactical distance of the enemy greatly outnumbering him in cavalry and artillery, across his front, but anyone who has ridden over the ground will have seen how well suited it was in its parallel undulation as the Kaitna is approached to conceal the infantry, as stated by the General and thus to prevent the discovery of his design. I have been tempted to linger I fear too long for the patience of your readers over this excursion of mine, perhaps it is because to many of us retired officers, originally of the old Indian local service, there is a seductive glamour in our early stripling associations with India, its scenes, its history, and our ordered study of the language of its people; we went out often mere boy cadets and our earliest manhood associations were affected by

"The ever silent spaces of the East
Far folded mists and gleaming halls of morn"
So "Still o'er the scenes our memory wakes."
And fondly broods with miser care:
Time but the impression deeper makes
As streams their channels deeper wear."

G. CARLTON, Colonel,
Retired, Royal Artillery.

CHAPTER XXVII

OPERATIONS AFTER THE BATTLE OF ASSAYE

At Assaye, Sindhia lost almost the whole of his guns and ordnance, but his loss in men was not very great. On the 24th September, 1803, Colonel Stevenson was ordered to pursue Sindhia's fugitive forces, as General Wellesley encamped at Assaye for a few days in order to write his despatches, and also to give rest to his men as well as to "place his numerous wounded in security." Mill (vi. p. 358) writes :

"The enemy had heen so little broken or dispersed by their defeat* that they had little to dread, from the pursuit of Colonel Stevenson."

It seems that Colonel Stevenson was not in a mood to pursue Sindhia's forces. He avoided them but attacked Sindhia's territories, of which an account will be given presently.

After the battle of Assaye, the existence of traitors in his camp was evident to Sindhia, for the disaster could not but have been attributed to treachery. Under the circumstance, he saw his safety in concluding peace with the British. Accordingly, he authorized Bala Kunjar to open negotiations with them. Bala Kunjar was one of the servants of the Peshwa and was sent by the latter to Sindhia to communicate to him the alliance that he (the Peshwa) had contracted with the British by the Treaty of Bassein and also, it would seem, to invite Sindhia to Puna.

It was the interest of the Governor-General and his gallant brother to describe Balaji Kunjar as a traitor. The former in a postscript to his despatch to the Secret Committee, dated 1st November, 1803, wrote :

"Ballojee Koonger was originally dispatched by His Highness the Peishwa from Bassein to Dowlut Rao Scindhia, for the purpose of explaining to that Chieftain the nature of the engagements concluded between the Peishwa and the British Government ; but, with the accustomed versatility and treachery of a Maratha Politician, Ballojee Koonger has subsequently attached himself to the service of Dowlut Rao Scindhia."

Similar was the language used by General Wellesley towards Balaji. But the historian of the Marathas, Captain Grant Duff, who was thoroughly acquainted with all the events connected with the war, does not call Balaji a traitor. On the contrary, he describes him as

"the Peishwa's most confidential agent, who, notwithstanding the war, continued in Scindhia's Camp."

We shall presently recur to Balaji's reasons for continuing in Sindhia's camp.

About a week or at the most ten days after the battle of Assaye, Balaji wrote to General Wellesley to settle the terms of pacification. The letter of Balaji to General

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* This confirms the statement we have made before that the disaster at Assaye was due to the treachery of Sindhia's European officers and men.

Wellesley is not published amongst the printed Despatches of the Duke of Wellington. But from the tone of the latter's reply, dated 5th October, 1803, it is not difficult to conjecture the purport of Balaji's letter. It seems that Balaji tried to make out that Sindhia's intentions were pacific and that the proof of the genuineness of his desire for peace was to be found in the dogged perseverance with which he clung to every chance of bringing the negotiations to a satisfactory issue. The reasons of Balaji's not quitting the camp of Sindhia seem to be that the British had never sent in an ultimatum to the Maratha Confederates and, as said before, they always confined themselves to vague generalities and never referred to the minimum of what they would accept. From General Wellesley's letter to Balaji, it also appears that the latter charged Collins with bringing about the rupture between the Maratha Confederates and the British, for "Col. Collins had quitted the camp (of Sindhia) without apprizing the Maharaja of his intentions, or going through the customary forms."

From the strong position which Balaji had taken up and from the manner in which his letter exposed the treacherous conduct of the Resident with Sindhia, there seemed to be no other valid argument left for General Wellesley than to charge Balaji with being a traitor and abuse him to his heart's content.*

General Wellesley's head was turned by the success that had so far attended his arms. He was, therefore, not inclined to lend an ear to the proposals for peace which

* Balaji Kunjar seems to have been an honest man and had the welfare of the Maratha Empire at heart. He did not and would not play into the hands of the British, who were then giving effect to the maxims laid down by Machiavelli and corrupting the Peshwa's ministers. The Christians, the Founder of whose creed taught them to pray daily to God, "Lead us not into temptations but deliver us from all evils," were not ashamed to bribe the Peshwa's ministers, to tempt them to betray their master. In the course of his letter dated Camp at Assaye, 28th September, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Lieut. Colonel Close, Resident at Puna :

"Lord Wellesley has taken up the question of paying the Peishwa's ministers upon a great scale. The Peishwa is certainly sincere in his intentions to adhere to the alliance ; but . . . the feelings of his mind are so far different from those which guide our conduct, that with the best intentions it must be expected that we shall frequently clash. . . . The Peishwa has no ministers. He is everything himself, and everything is little. In my opinion, therefore, we ought to pay those who are supposed to be and are called his ministers, not to keep the machine of Government in motion in consistence with the objects of the alliance as we do at Hyderabad, but, to have intelligence of what passes in the Peishwa's secret councils, in order that we may check him in time when it may be necessary."

Balaji Kunjar was the Peshwa's most confidential agent ; those who have read Grant Duff's History of the Marathas are aware of the faithful manner in which he had served his master, and on one occasion, he even risked his life for the welfare of the subjects of his master's dominion. The British could not buy him over with their gold to betray his master's interests and hence they did not scruple to call him a traitor. There is not the tittle of an evidence to show that he went over to the Camp of Sindhia, or betrayed the Peshwa. Moreover, when we remember the fact that Balaji Kunjar had once attempted to imprison (if not assassinate) Sirzee Rao Ghatgay (very closely related to Dowla Rao Sindhia), it is impossible to believe that he could have ever been a *persona grata* with Sindhia or taken into his confidence. It is certain that he loved his master Baji Rao and never betrayed his interests. It is equally certain that there was not much love lost between him and Sindhia. Hence his testimony regarding Colonel Collin's conduct in precipitating the war should carry conviction into the mind of every unprejudiced person.

Balaji Kunjar urged. On the other hand, his appetite was whetted by the spoils he had gathered at the battle-field of Assaye. But so far no treasure, that is, ready money, had fallen into his hands. And therefore he was anxious to prosecute the war with all possible vigor. As said before, he detached Colonel Stevenson to pursue Sindhia. That officer avoided Sindhia, for although the latter had lost the whole of his guns and ordnance through the treachery of European officers, his power was still considered formidable: for he was still strong in his cavalry and mounted infantry. It was therefore thought prudent and politic to avoid pursuing him. It would have been better if the Maratha Confederates had taken the offensive and attacked the British. But after the disaster of Assaye, they seemed to act on the defensive only, and also tried to conclude peace with the latter. This was a mistake for which they had to pay very dearly. The reason which seems to have deterred them from taking the offensive was the existence of traitors in their camp. Neither good generalship nor far-seeing statemanship would have been of any avail to them when their camp reeked with traitors. Moreover, they were reduced to great straits, as their commissariat supplies had fallen off. General Wellesley seized some of the cart-loads of grain which had been proceeding to Sindhia's camp and so in a triumphant mood he wrote to his brother, the Governor-General, on the 6th October, 1803, that "they (the Maratha Confederates) were in great distress, and the price of grain in their camp one seer for a rupee." All the above mentioned considerations made the Confederates desirous of peace or at the most of acting on the defensive.

After the battle of Assaye, it seems that the Raja of Berar separated from Sindhia. From the letter of General Wellesley to his brother, Henry Wellesley (afterwards Lord Cowley), then in England, dated 24th January, 1804, we learn that

"after the battle of Assaye, those two chiefs fled* into Candeish. . . .

"Colonel Stevenson followed them down the Adjuntee Ghaut. They fled† to the Taptee, along which river they marched to the westward. As soon as I had placed my numerous wounded in security, I marched with my division to Adjuntee, and ordered Colonel Stevenson to advance towards Burhanpoor, and levy a contribution upon that city, and lay siege to Asseerghur"

General Wellesley does not mention why the pursuit of the Maratha Confederates was given up. It will be rememembered that Colonel Stevenson had been detached to pursue Sindhia and the the Raja of Berar, and with this intention he left Assaye on the 24th September, that is, the day following the battle. It would not have been difficult to overtake them had he been possessed of dash and courage like Napoleon. But the Marathas eluded him and his pursuit of them resembled the chase after the will-o-the-wisp. It was probably on this account that General Wellesley ordered him to march on to Burhanpur and took upon himself the task of pursuing the Confederates.

* The Maratha confederates *retreated* and *not fled*. It should be remembered that Assaye was not in the territories of any of the confederates. After the disaster at Assaye, it was only natural for the confederates to retreat into their own dominions. They retreated in order to protect their territories from the attacks of the British.

† Retreated and not fled.

But the himself does not seem to have fared better than Colonel Stevenson. He wrote :

"Upon my arrival at Adjuntee, I found that Scindhia and the Raja of Berar had quitted the Taptee, and had moved to the southward apparently with an intention of passing out of Candeish through the hills situated north of the Godavery, and of invading the territories of the Peishwa or he Nizam, and all the remains of the defeated infantry had been sent across the Taptee towards Hindustan. This movement was intended to divert my attention from the siege of Asseerghur ; or if I should persevere in that operation, the confederates would have invaded the territories of the Peishwa and the Nizam, and would have entirely destroyed the rich provinces of the latter, upon which I depended for resources of grain to enable me to carry on the war, and would, at all events, have cut off or impeded the communication which I had with Poona and Bombay by Ahmednagar. I therefore determined to leave the siege of Asseerghur to Colonel Stevenson's division, and to march myself to the southward, in order to follow the motions of the confederates.

"On the 11th of October, I arrived in the neighbourhood of Aurangabad, and there remained till the 15th. On that night I received most accurate accounts of the disposition of the enemy's army, from which I was of opinion that they intended to move upon Colonel Stevenson, in order to interrupt the siege of Asseerghur, and I returned immediately towards Adjuntee.

"I arrived there on the 18th, and descended the Ghaut into Candeish on the 19th. Scindhia, who had returned to the northward, then halted his army at Ahoonah, on the Taptee, within three marches of Burhanpoor.

"Colonel Stevenson arrived on the 15th at Burhanpoor, of which place he took possession ; he marched to Asseerghur on the 17th, drove in the enemy, and took possession of the pettah on the 18th, by which means he had a fine situation from whence to carry on his attack against the fort ; he broke ground on the 19th, and the fort surrendered on the 21st.

The fall of Burhanpur and of Asirgar was almost a foregone conclusion. No surprise need be expressed at the ease with which both these places fell into the hands of the British. It is again, the same old story of the traitors in Sindhia's camp betraying their master. As usual, these traitors were Europeans. The short-sighted policy of Mahadji Sindhia in employing European officers and men was now costing his successor the principality he had built up. On the 23rd October, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Colonel Close, Resident at Puna :

"I have the pleasure to inform you that I have reason to believe that Colonel Stevenson took possession of the fort of Asseerghur on the 21st. He writes on the 19th, that the infantry which had collected between that place and Burhanpoor was gone off towards the Nerbudda. Sixteen of the European officers, sergeants, etc,, had come in to him on the terms of the proclamation, among whom were Colonel Dupont, Captain Mercier, and Captain Mann."

So then from the official despatches of General Wellesley, it is quite evident that the fall of Burhanpur and Asirgar was encompassed by the treachery of Sindhia's European officers and men.

There was now very little left for General Wellesley to accomplish in the Deccan. But his task was not over, and he did not think of concluding peace with the Maratha Confederates till after the siege of Gawilghur and the battle of Argaum.

If he did not conclude peace with them, he at least deceived them ; for at the time when he fought the battle of Argaum, there was an armistice with the Maratha Confederates. On the 24th October, 1803, he wrote to the Governor-General :

"Since I forwarded to your Excellency the copies of my correspondence with Ballojee Koonger

on the subject of peace, I have received various messages and letters through different channels on the same subject, . . . I have uniformly referred them to the answer which I wrote to Ballojee Koonger.

"It is reported that Dowlut Rao Scindhia and the Rajah of Berar have quarrelled, that the latter intends to endeavour to obtain a peace through the mediation of Amrut Rao, and the former through that of the Peishwa, or by secret negotiation. Excepting that these chiefs have separated their armies, I have no reason to believe that they have quarrelled, and I can give your Excellency no information to enable you to form a judgment of the truth of the remainder of the report.

"I think it probable, however, that negotiations for peace will soon be commenced by those chiefs."

It was evident then that the Maratha Confederates desired for peace and that with this object in view they had separated their armies. Instead of trying to conclude peace with the Confederates, these very circumstances appeared so tempting to General Wellesley as to attack them, as he thought, to utterly crush them.

So long neither the General nor his lieutenant, Colonel Stevenson, had made any attempt to pursue Sindhia or the Raja of Berar. But now when these Maratha princes had separated their armies, a very favorable opportunity occurred to the British to pursue them, and they tried to eagerly seize it and turn it to their advantage. Colonel Stevenson was ordered to watch the movement of Sindhia while General Wellesley himself went against the Raja of Berar. But the General was not lucky in his expedition against the Bhonsle. In his letter to his brother, Henry Wellesley, dated 24th January, 1804, General Wellesley mentioned the causes of the failure of his expedition. He wrote:

"I arrived at Adjuntee, on the top of the Ghaut, on the 25th (October 1803), marched on the following days to the southward, and passed Aurangabad on the 29th. The Rajah of Berar, in the usual style of a Maratha, had spent his time after he had come out of Candeish in plundering the country, and negotiating with Amrut Rao, who was encamped on the Godavery, to induce that chief to join him.*

"The Rajah was still, on the 29th (October 1803), between Aurangabad and the Godavery, and I hoped to have been able to attack him. He marched, however, on the night of the 29th, and between that time and the night of the 31st, during the whole of which I was in his neighbourhood, he marched with his camp five times. On the 31st, in the morning, he detached a body of five thousand horse to attack a large convoy on its march from the southward to join the troops on the frontier, the arrival of which was delayed by the obstinacy of the officer who commanded,† before it crossed the Godavery, and which river it crossed only on the 30th. . . .

"The necessity of taking care of this convoy was unfortunate. If I had not been under the

* The Raja of Berar was negotiating with Amrut Rao to intercede on his behalf with the British to conclude peace. He was no more plundering the country than the British were. His army was in great distress for want of grain and he was levying contributions on the villages for the maintenance of his army. It was no plunder but a perfectly legitimate process with military commanders.

† The officer was named Captain Seton. General Wellesley had him Court-martialled. On the 2nd November, 1803, he wrote to Major Kirkpatrick :—"I have to inform you that I have brought Captain Seton to trial before a General Court Martial, for disobedienee of orders, in omitting to march from Dharore on the 1st of October, according to the orders he had received, by which the risk to which the convoy was exposed would have been avoided, and my movements against the enemy would not have been cramped by the necessity of taking care of it."

necessity of directing the movements of the troops in such manner as to protect it, at the same time that I pushed the Rajah, I should have had it in my power to have destroyed him between the 29th and 31st of October (1803).

"But all the subsequent solid operations of the war depended upon the arrival of that convoy, and it was more important to secure it, than to gain a victory over a body of horse; in the attempt to obtain which I might have failed, and then I should have lost the convoy."

After the failure of his expedition against the Raja of Berar and when he found that Colonel Stevenson also could do nothing against Dowlat Rao Sindhia, the General thought it expedient to lend a favorable ear to the negotiations for peace which the Maratha Confederates had been proposing. Accordingly he wrote a letter on the 30th October, 1803, to Balaji Kunjar (this time he did not abuse him or call him a traitor). He wrote :

"I have received your letter . . . and Colonel Stevenson has transmitted to me a Persian letter, in which you have informed him that Mahomed Meer Khan was about to be sent on a mission to me. I shall be happy to see Meer Khan. I will receive him in a manner suitable to his rank, and I will pay every attention to what he may have to communicate."

At the same time, he also wrote to Muhammad Mir Khan as follows :

"I have received your letter, and Mirza Wahed Beg has communicated to me what you desired he should and Colonel Stevenson has sent me different letters which you have written to him, and one which Ballojee Koonger has written to him in the Persian language, by which I learn that you are coming here on a mission to me. I shall be happy to see you, and will receive you with the honors due to your rank and character, and I shall pay every attention to what you may have to communicate."

But it was not Muhammad Mir Khan who came as an envoy on the part of the Maratha Confederates to the British General to negotiate for peace. It was Jaswunt Rao Ghorpare who was deputed to settle the terms of peace. The circumstances attending the deputation of this person to General Wellesley are related by the latter in his despatch dated 11th November, 1803, to the Governor-General.

The result of the negotiations was that on the 23rd November, 1803, an armistice was concluded by General Wellesley with Dowlat Rao Sindhia. Although the envoys solicited a cessation of arms for both the Confederates, the General refused it to the Raja of Berar, because it was alleged that he had sent no envoy, nor expressed any desire for peace. It was convenient for the General to ignore the fact that the envoys sent, represented the Raja of Berar as well as Sindhia. But General Wellesley had been smarting under the failure that had attended his expedition against the Bhonsle and therefore, he was not amenable to reason, justice or fairplay.

Another reason for not concluding an armistice with the Raja of Berar was that General Wellesley wished to play off Sindhia against the Bhonsle. Writing to Major Shawe (Private Secretary to the Governor-General) on the 3rd November, 1803, General Wellesley said :

"The Rajah of Berar's troops are not included in it, and consequently there becomes a division of interest between these two chiefs. All confidence in Sindhia, if it ever existed, must be at an end, and the confederacy is *ipso facto*, dissolved,"

From the letter from which the extract has been given above, we learn that the

motives which prompted General Wellesley to conclude the armistice were dishonest and treacherous. He wrote:

"I have already apprized the Governor-General that it was not in my power to do anything more against Dowlut Rao Sindhia. . . .

"Scindhia has with him in the field an army of horse only. It is impossible to expect to make any impression upon this army, unless by following it for a great length of time and distance. To do this would remove our troops still farther than they are already from all the sources of supply, and would prevent the operations against the Raja of Berar, from which alone, in my opinion, we are to expect peace. . . .

"I can see no inconvenience whatever that can result from the measure : and if the negotiations for peace are delayed in consequence of having concluded the cessation of hostilities, I have it in my power to put an end to that agreement whenever I may think proper.

"The rule not to cease from hostilities till peace is concluded is a good one in general : and I have adhered to it, in practice, at the siege of Ahmednagar : and I have ordered an adherence to it in all instances of that kind. *But in this, I think it is a rule, of which the breach is more beneficial than the observance.*"

Yes, he could not see any inconvenience, nay in his mode of thinking "the breach was more beneficial than the observance," because that was the way to lull the Maratha Confederates, or at least Sindhia, into a false sense of security, by making him believe that the British would cease all hostilities and conclude peace. But such were not the real intentions of the British General. He merely wanted time to make preparations and treacherously attack the Maratha Confederates after having thrown them off their guard by concluding the armistice. On the 24th November, 1803, he wrote to Colonel Close:

"I have agreed to the cessation of hostilities on the ground of my incapability to do Scindhia further injury, as stated in my dispatch to the Governor-General of the 24th October ; on that of it being impossible to injure his army of horse ; on that of the injury he may do me in the operations against Gawilghur and in Guzerat, to which quarter he has sent Bappojee Scindhia ; and on the political ground of dividing his interests from those of the Raja of Berar, and thereby, in fact, dissolving the confederacy."

That the real motive of the British General to conclude the armistice was to gain time, he himself admitted. On the 24th November, 1803, he wrote to the Governor-General :

"If advantage should be taken of the cessation of hostilities to delay the negotiations for peace, your Excellency will observe that *I have the power of putting an end to it when I please ; and that, supposing I am obliged to put an end to it, on the day after I shall receive its ratification, I shall at least have gained so much time everywhere for my operations, and shall have succeeded in dividing the enemy entirely.*"

The treachery and hypocrisy, then, of the British General are quite evident. He took advantage of the armistice by attacking Sindhia and fighting the battle of Argaum. By granting the armistice, he gained time in making preparations. It will be observed that the armistice was concluded on the 23rd November. At that time Colonel Stevenson, who had been ordered to make preparations for the siege of Gawilghur, had not entered the territory of the Raja of Berar. Ceneral Wellesley had not also been able to assist Colonel Stevenson by sending reinforcements. Writing on the 24th January, 1804, to his brother Henry Wellesley, General Wellesley said :

"Towards the middle of November, Colonel Stevenson had completed all his equipments for the siege of Gawilghur, and was enabled to quit Burhanpoor. He marched up the valley of the Poorna river to Ballapoor in Berar, where he arrived on the 23rd, and he was joined on the 24th by the convoy which had been saved from the Rajah of Berar by Captain Baynes' affair at Umber, on the 31st October, and my march to the southward."

There was no need now on the part of the General to observe the truce. He was the first to violate it. He fabricated the pretext that Sindhia had not carried out one of the essential conditions of the armistice. He wrote to his brother Henry Wellesley, on the 24th January, 1803:

"You will have observed, that after I had concluded the treaty for suspending hostilities with Scindhia, I had fought his army at Argaum on the 29th of November. At that time he had not ratified the treaty, and he had not performed any one of its stipulations; and I gave notice to his vakeels that I should attack him if I should meet his army."

The stipulations of the treaty give the lie direct to the above statement of the British General. The treaty was concluded on the 23rd November, 1803, and the concluding article of the treaty laid down:

"This agreement is to be ratified by the Maharaja Dowlat Rao Sindhia, and his ratification is to be given to Major-General Wellesley in the space of ten days from this date."

So then according to this stipulation of the treaty, hostilities should have ceased till the 3rd December, 1803. Sindhia had been given ten days to ratify it, and it was nothing less than treachery on the part of General Wellesley to have attacked him within the space of ten days after the conclusion of the treaty.

General Wellesley found fault with Sindhia for his not carrying out the second article of the treaty, which ran as follows:

"To prevent accidents, and in order to ensure the execution of the 1st article, it is agreed, that there shall be an interval of twenty coss between the different British and allied armies, and that the Maharajah will march with his army, and take up a position twenty coss to the eastward of Ellichpoor, and he will forage still further to the eastward."

Sindhia accordingly was marching with his army, but the British General was following him, in order, it appears, to prevent him from fulfilling the condition of the treaty. His real intention was to gain time to make his preparations and then to attack Sindhia after lulling his suspicions by concluding the armistice.

It was under such circumstances, having every advantage on his side, that General Wellesley treacherously attacked Sindhia and fought the battle of Argaum on the 29th November 1803, that is, six days only after the conclusion of the Treaty of Armistice. In vain did the vakils from Dowlat Rao Sindhia press him not to attack their master. He justified his conduct by writing to the Governor-General on the 30th November, 1803.

"Your Excellency has been informed, that on the 23rd I had consented to a suspension of hostilities with the troops of Dowlut Rao Sindhia, in this quarter and Guzerat. The condition on which this agreement depended, *viz.*, that Sindhia should occupy a position twenty coss to the east of Ellichpoor,' had not been carried into execution."

Regarding this pretext for attacking Sindhia, we have already observed that in the agreement there was no date fixed by which Sindhia was to have occupied a position

twenty coss to the east of Ellichpoor; but from the last article of the Treaty, it was evident that the truce should have at least lasted for 10 (ten) days from the date of the conclusion of the Treaty. It was therefore nothing short of treachery on the part of the British General to have attacked Sindhia on the 29th November, 1803.

It was a foregone conclusion, therefore, that General Wellesley should come out victorious at the battle of Argaum. And so he did. On the 30th November, 1803, he wrote his official despatch to the Governor-General describing his victory won treacherously at Argaum. The Governor-General was highly pleased at the treacherous conduct of his brother. Dating his letter from Fort William, 23rd December, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to General Wellesley:

"I received this morning your dispatch of the 30th November. . . . Although I entirely approved of your armistice, and thought it a most judicious measure, I confess that I prefer your victory to your armistice; . . .

"I have not yet discovered whether the battle was occasioned by a rupture of the truce on the part of Sindhia; or by Sindhia's refusal to grant to his vakeels the powers which you most properly have required, for the purpose of founding the basis of the negotiation, on the admission of our retention of a part of our conquests; or by Sindhia's re-disavowal of his avowal of Jeswunt Rao Goorparah; or by an accidental rencontre of the armies before the truce had commenced; or by a treacherous junction between Sindhia and the Rajah of Berar. But, *qua cunque via*, a battle is a profit with the Native powers."

The above paragraph, if language has any meaning, clearly shows that the Governor-General did not find any fault with Sindhia's conduct regarding the truce, but, on the contrary, he failed to understand what induced his brother to attack Sindhia during the period of the armistice. Anyhow, he congratulated his brother on his successful treachery, because he preferred the victory to the armistice!

After the battle of Argaum, General Wellesley proceeded to besiege and storm Gawilgarh. For this purpose, he and Colonel Stevenson marched on from Argaum and arrived at Ellichpur on the 5th December, and halted there on the 6th, in order to establish a hospital for the wounded in the battle of Argaum. Both the divisions encamped before Gawilgarh on the 11th December, 1803. The fort was stormed on the 14th.

It was with no difficulty that the fort of Gawilgarh was stormed and fell into the hands of the British, whom the Raja of Berar had hardly made any preparations to resist or oppose. However, to the credit of the Fort Commander, he did not betray his trust. He died in its defence.

With the fall of Gawilgarh ended the campaign of General Wellesley in the Deccan. After this, peace was concluded with Sindhia as well as the Raja of Berar.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE WAR IN GUZERAT

The fertile province of Guzerat was made a part of the Mughal Empire by Akbar the Great. It remained so for nearly two centuries. But when the era of the disruption of the Mughal Empire was inaugurated by Nizam-ul-Mulk, that traitor encouraged and helped the Marathas to conquer Guzerat. It has already been mentioned how the Gaekwars had established their supremacy over a portion of Guzerat with their capital at Baroda. Mahadji Sindhia was rewarded by the British for his faithlessness to the Maratha Confederates and acting as mediator in the Treaty of Salbye, with a portion of Guzerat dependant on the fortress of Baroach. Baroach and its neighbourhood then constituted Sindhia's territory in Guzerat, against which the British directed their hostilities. There was not much difficulty to reduce Baroach and acquire that portion of Guzerat which owned the suzerainty of Dowlat Rao Sindhia. This was very easily accomplished, since the topography of the Baroach fort was well-known to the English.

The Gaekwar's capital afforded the base of operations.

General Wellesley had been entrusted by his brother to direct the operations against Sindhia's territories in Guzerat. Accordingly he wrote to the Governor of Bombay, on the 2nd August, 1803, the measures that should be adopted for the defence of Guzerat, which in non-diplomatic language meant for the invasion of Sindhia's territories in that part of India. He wrote :

"As his Excellency the Governor-General has been pleased to give orders in his letter to you of the 9th July, that the troops in those districts should be placed under my command, I imagine that Major-General Jones will return to Bombay ; and as it will be necessary that the officer who will have that extensive charge should be one of character, capacity, and rank, upon reference to the list of the Bombay army, I should think that Sir William Clarke and Colonel Murray are the most fit for such an employment.

"The former already fills a situation from which it would be difficult, if not impossible to relieve him immediately ; and if you approve of the latter, I should recommend him."

Accordingly, Colonel Murray was appointed to the chief command of the forces in Guzerat to act under the orders of General Wellesley. On the 6th August, 1803, the latter wrote to the officer commanding the troops in the territories of Anand Rao Gaekwar, Baroda,

"Upon the receipt of this letter, you will commence your operations against Dowlut Rao Sindhia's fort of Baroach.

"You will not suffer these operations to be interrupted or delayed by any negotiation whatever. You will send the Governor of Bombay a copy of the report which you will transmit to me, of the measures which you will have adopted in consequence of this order."

Baroda, as has been said, was made the base of operations. But it appears from the published records that the Gaekwar objected to help the British in their unjust

invasion of Sindhia's territories in Guzerat. It was on account of this, that General Wellesley wrote to the Secretary of Government, Bombay, on the 22nd August, 1803, a long letter showing that the Gaekwar was bound to assist the British in their wars—whether just or unjust—against any native power of India. A few extracts from the General's letter are given below:

"Lieut.-Colonel Close has forwarded to me copies of a correspondence between Mr. Duncan and Major Walker, in which an important question is discussed, respecting the nature of the alliance between the Honorable Company and the Guickwar State, and how far the latter is obliged to enter into the war with Sindhia, with whose Government he is in 'close alliance.' , .

"I have seen copies of two treaties between the Company and the Guickwar, by which the latter has agreed to subsidize one Company of artillery, and two battallions of native infantry; both Governments have agreed that there should be true friendship and good understanding between them; . . .

"Although it is not immediately specified, it can never have been intended that the Company should protect the Guickwar State, unless the Guickwar should also assist the Company with its forces against the enemies of the British Government. Indeed, I cannot understand the words 'true friendship and good understanding,' in any other manner. If it were otherwise, the consequence would be, that the Company would be involved in perpetual war for the protection of the Guickwar State, without any adequate compensation, excepting that of repayment of the expenses incurred; and the connexion between the two Governments would be one not very creditable to the Honorable Company." . . .

By concluding the Subsidiary Alliance with the English, the Gaekwar, in common with all other princes, who had fallen into the snare of that alliance, was a prisoner in their hands. His objections and his protests were of no avail. Against his will, he had to render them assistance in their unjust and unholy war.

The operations in Guzerat were to be commenced by the siege of Baroach. This was determined upon, because it was a well-known fact that the garrison of the place was weak. In the letter to the Secretary of Government, Bombay, from which extracts have already been given above, General Wellesley wrote:

"The Governor-General has positively ordered, and there is no doubt whatever of the expediency, that operations should be commenced in Guzerat, by the siege of Baroach. This place is of no strength whatever. Major Walker declares that its garrison is weak; if preparations were made as suggested in my letter of the 26th of July to Major Walker; and if the attack has been made as ordered in my letter of the 6th of August, it will certainly be in our possession before any of the particular enemies of the Guickwar State, or Jeswant Rao Holkar can know of the war."

But it was also necessary to enter into a campaign of intrigues, before going to war with Sindhia's troops in Guzerat. The inhabitants of Sindhia's territories in Guzerat were mostly composed of Bhils. The English were to intrigue with them. General Wellesley, in his letter dated 2nd August, 1803, to the Governor of Bombay, wrote:

"The whole range of mountains is in the possession of Bheels, whose exertions would prevent the invasion of any party of marauding horse.

"This fact points out the necessity of cultivating a good understanding with and encouraging the Bheels, so as to attach them to our cause."

He concluded this important letter by urging on the Bombay Government to intrigue with the Bhils. For he wrote:

"I cannot conclude this letter without requesting that you will urge the gentlemen at Surat to keep on terms with the Bheels : this appear to be a race of the same description with those who inhabit the hills in all parts of India. By conciliation, and refraining from an interference with their concerns, they will prove our best friends, and a contrary line of conduct will make them our worst enemies : it must not be expected that we should involve ourselves in the affairs of these Bheels, or press them for tribute. The number of troops I have above detailed will be sufficient for the protection of the valuable territory of which you have got posssssion : *they will not be sufficient for the subjection even of any of their rajahs* ; and from what I have seen of the service in other parts of India, I have no hesitation in declaring my opinion, that, as a measure of economy, it would be better to give up all claims of tribute that the Company might have upon any of those rajahs, than to receive it at the risk of the expense of being obliged to enforce its payment at some future day."

The words put in italics in the above extract clearly convey the idea that the English did not conquer India by the sword, but succeeded in establishing their power by fraud and intrigue. General Wellesley counselled intrigue with the Bhils, in order to make the invasion of Sindhia's territories in Guzerat a success.

For invading Sindhia's territories in Guzerat, Colonel Murray, to whom General Wellesley had delegated his authority, detailed Lieutenant-Cololel Woodington for the task. Lieut.-Colonel Woodington did not find much difficulty in capturing Baroach. On the 25th August, 1803, he wrote to General Wellesley :

"Agreeably to my communication to you, I marched from Baroda on the 21st, and encamped within two coss of Baroach on the 23rd."

On the morning of the 25th August, the pettah on the western face of the fort of Baroach was taken possession of ; and on the 29th August, the fort was captured. On that day, Colonel Woodington wrote to General Wellesley :

"I have the honor to acquaint you, that at three o'clock, P. M., I stormed the fort of Baroach, and carried it with little loss, although the Arabs made considerable resistance, particularly on our entering the breach."

Again, on the 30th August, he wrote :

"The breach was reported practicable by the engineer at eleven A. M., when I determined to storm ; but delayed it until three o'clock, ... as I thought that a very likely hour to find the enemy off their guard."

The capture of Baroach was thus very easily accomplished. The territories dependent on Baroach yielded an annual revenue of eleven lakhs of rupees. Although the Guikwar rendered so much assistance to the British in their operations against Sindhia in Guzerat, it does not appear that he derived any benefits from them. They certainly did not give him any portion of the territories which they had wrested from Sindhia in Guzerat.

Besides Baroach, Sindhia possessed the fort of Powanghur in Guzerat. On this fort was dependent the district of Champanir. It was now the intention of Colonel Woodington to capture this fort. By the fall of this fort, Sindhia would be deprived of all his territorial possessions in Guzerat. On the 27th August, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to the Governor of Bombay :

"In respect to the fort of Powanghur, I will send directions that it may be attacked as soon as I

shall find that the troops are assembled north of the river Nerbudda, and in a state of equipment fit to undertake that operation.

"It does not appear that Dowlat Rao Scindhia has any territories South of the Nerbudda, bordering upon the sea coast, which would become the object of the operations of the troops in Guzerat."

After the fall of Baroach, Lieut.-Colonel Woodington marched on Powangarh. The fall of this fort was very easily accomplished, for it appears that its defenders were not faithful to their master. Colonel Woodington wrote on the 21st September, 1803, to Colonel Murray, commanding the forces in Guzerat:

"After a breach had been effected in the wall of the inner fort, as also that another was almost practicable in a tower at the angle of the outer fort, the garrison offered to capitulate on the morning of the 17th, on condition of being protected in their persons and private property. To these terms I agreed, on condition of immediately taking possession of the breach in the inner wall with a Company of Sepoys; they however tacked other stipulations to the capitulation, *viz.*, that I should agree to pay them the arrears due from Scindhia, and that two of the Commanders of the Guickwar Cavalry with me (amounting to about 300 horse) should sign the agreement. To these latter articles I would on no account agree, and it was not until four P. M. when they found from our continuing to batter that I would admit of no delay, that they agreed to the original terms, which were immediately carried into full effect, by their evacuation of the fort and mountain of which we took possession.

"Could they have obtained possession of the upper fort, or Balla Killa, at the top of the mountain I am inclined to think it utterly impregnable."

Reading the above extracts between the lines, there seems to be every reason to suspect that the defenders of the fort had been bribed to betray their master and hand over the fort to the British. Gold supplied the key to unlock the gate of Powangarh and admit the troops under the leadership of the British.

The war against Sindhia in Guzerat ceased with the fall of Powangarh for that prince had no more territories in Guzerat. The British deprive him now of all the possessions in Guzerat which had been held out as a bait to Madhavarao Sindhia for his helping them out of their difficulties and concluding the Treaty of Salbye.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE WAR IN ORISSA.

The English under Clive had obtained from the Mughal Emperor, the Dewany of Orissa. But their possession in Orissa was a small tract of land in the northern portion of that province. The greater part of Orissa was under the sovereignty of the Bhonslas of Nagpur. It is not necessary to mention how the Marathas got possession of the province by expelling the Muhammadans. An account of that will be found in Grant Duff's History of the Marathas.

Orissa was not a *terra incognita* to the British. The natives of England had for more than a century been in possession of factories and trading posts in Orissa before the Marathas had conquered the province. It appears that on the conquest of that province by the Marathas, the English had suffered some loss in their trade. So when the Dewany of Orissa was granted to Clive and his compatriots by the Mughals, it was proposed to send an expedition against the Marathas. But then the latter were in the zenith of their power and the British anticipated disasters if they were to cross blades with them. So even the "daring" Clive considered discretion to be the better part of valour, and the idea of an expedition against the Marathas was given up. The Court of Directors in 1764 expressed their great pleasure at learning that the proposed expedition against the Marathas in Balasore and Katak had been given up, as 'conquests are not our aim.' Well, this reminds one of the expression of the disappointed fox in the fable of the grapes being sour!

The British, however, lived on good terms with the Marathas. The Directors of the East India Company in 1767 agreed to pay to the Marathas all arrears of *Chauth* on condition of the cession of Orissa, the Dewany of which, as said above, was granted to the Company. Negotiations were in consequence opened with the Marathas to this end. A vakil, one Udaipuri Gosain, was appointed by the Raja of Berar to treat with the Bengal Council, and the amount was fixed at 13 lakhs of rupees. This is the version of the English. But the Vakil declared that he had no authority to deliver up the province to them. They then could have gone to war with the Marathas had they

* Mr. Beames writes :—"To Balasore belongs the honour of containing the first settlement made by our countrymen in any part of the Bengal Presidency. By a firman, dated February 2nd, 1634, the Emperor Shah Jahan granted them permission to establish a factory at Pipli on the Subanrekha. . . . In 1640, through the intervention of Mr. Boughton, a Surgeon who had obtained great influence over several members of the Royal Family by curing them of various diseases, the English obtained permission to establish factories at Balasore and Hughli. In consequence of this permission they applied to the Nawab, who granted them 12 batis (a bati is 20 bighas) of land near the village of Balasore, which was then rising into some importance as a port. The settlement was called Barabati (i.e., twelve batis) from its extent, and is at present the principal quarter of the modern town of Balasore, and the residence of the wealthiest merchants." (*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* for 1883).

the pluck and courage to do so. But like the sly fox, they were merely watching their opportunity and, it would also seem, intriguing with the people of Orissa, ever since their rebuff in 1767. In his "Notes on the History of Orissa," published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* for 1883, Mr. J. Beames, writing of the prosperous condition of the natives of Orissa under the rule of the Marathas, said :

"A seer of rice was sold for 15 gandas or about 70 seers to the rupee. . . . Opium cost a *pan* of cowries per masha, salt 14 karas per seer. The advantages of low prices were, however, much counterbalanced by the capricious exactions of the rulers. Although they seem to have had the sense not to drive away the trade by oppressing foreigners, yet upon the natives of the province itself they had no mercy. It was dangerous to be rich, or at least to display any amount of wealth, lest the attention of the Marathas should be called to the fact, and plunder and extortion follow as a matter of course. *It is not surprising, therefore, that when the English appeared on the scene, the Marathas were left to fight their own battles, quite unsupported by the people. Indeed, they seem to have been so conscious of their unpopularity as never to have attempted to enlist the sympathies of the Oriyas on their behalf. Had they done so, the turbulent Rajas of the hills and the sea-coast might have given us a great deal of trouble and enabled the Marathas to hold out to some time.*"

It is not necessary to consider how far the allegations of cruelties and atrocities said to have been practised by the Marathas on the natives of Orissa are founded on facts and not merely the fabrications of the fertile imaginative brains of English historians and writers.* But the sentences put in italics in the above extract afford strong grounds to

* Had the Maratha rule been cruel and atrocious, the people could not have been so prosperous and contented as even this English writer admits. In those days famines were unknown in Orissa. But no sooner had the British made their appearance on the scene than we read of nothing but famines almost every fifth year in that province. Even Mr. Beames writes :

"Cuttack now begins to be noticeable as it is *at frequent intervals throughout the early years of British rule as a place in constant want of supplies and always on the verge of famine.* On 1st December 1803 an urgent call is made for fifteen thousand maunds of rice from Balasore. Again on the 1st June 1804 Captain Morgan is ordered to warn all pilgrims of the great scarcity of rice and cowries at Cuttack, and to endeavour to induce them to supply themselves with provisions before entering the province."

The economical condition of Orissa was never so bad under the Marathas. The people never suffered the pangs of hunger or died of starvation.

The Governor-General in Council, as was usual, wrote to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors on the 31st October 1803 :—"The inhabitants of the province of Cuttack afforded every assistance to the British troops on their march, and expressed the utmost satisfaction at the prospect of being speedily relieved from the oppressions to which they had uniformly been subjected by the Maratha Government, and of being placed under the protection of the British power."

The poor people were soon undeceived. The substitution of the European for the Maratha came to be regarded by them as jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. The same writer who has been so often quoted above (Mr. J. Beames) says :—"Well aware of our ignorance of the country, they all with one accord abstained from helping us in any way, no open resistance was ventured upon, but all stolidly sat aloof—papers were hidden, information withheld, boats, bullocks and carts sent out of the way, the Zemindars who were ordered to go into Cuttack to settle for their estates did not go, and on searching for them at their homes could not be found, were reported as absent, on a journey, no one knew where. But if from ignorance the English officers

suspect that the English had been intriguing with the Oriyas against the Marathas. There was hardly any fighting in Orissa. No ultimatum, as has been said over and over again in the previous chapters, was ever sent by the British to the Maratha Confederates. The latter had no time or opportunity to prepare for the war, whereas the English had been making every war-like preparation since many years past. It would also seem that although the British did not get Orissa by acting on the Machiavellian maxims in 1767, for the Vakil Udaipuri Gosain was more than a match for the perfidious servants of the Company, yet the latter never gave up hopes of some-day possessing it. With this object in view, they would seem to have been intriguing with the natives of that province.

The Marquess Wellesley's instructions to the officer who was entrusted with carrying on the war in Orissa, would also lend support to the hypothesis that the British had been intriguing with the Oriyas and their acquisition of Orissa was accomplished more by fraud and intrigues than by conquest or straightforward means.

Colonel Campbell was entrusted to carry on military operations in Orissa. The Marquess Wellesley wrote to him on the 3rd August, 1803 :

"You have been apprized by my Military Secretary of my general views and intentions, with respect to the occupation of the province of Cuttack.

"You have been informed that a force will be detached from Bengal to act under your command, together with the force which you may be enabled to collect from the Northern Circars, in consequence of the orders signified to you by my Military Secretary. The force from Bengal will embark in the course of a day or two, and I have directed returns of it to accompany these instructions.

"You were directed to assemble at Ganjam from the division of the army under your command, a force of not less than fifteen hundred native infantry, and to increase that force, if practicable, consistently with the tranquility of the Northern Circars.

"With the force, which you have assembled under those orders, and with the detachment from Bengal, you will enter the province of Cuttack and proceed to Juggernaut.

"In passing the frontier of the Maratha territory you will use every possible means to conciliate the inhabitants, for which purpose you will issue the proclamation,* which accompanies this despatch. You will also promise protection to the persons and property of all those who shall remain in their possessions, and shall not attempt to act against the British authority, declaring that no person shall be molested excepting such as may appear in arms. * * * *

"On your arrival at Juggernaut, you will employ every possible precaution to preserve the respect due to the Pagoda, and to the religious prejudices of the Brahmins and pilgrims. You will furnish the Brahmins with such guards as shall afford perfect security to their persons, rites and ceremonials, and to the sanctity of the religious edifices, and you will strictly enjoin those under your command to observe your orders on this important subject, with the utmost degree of accuracy and vigilance.

"The Brahmins are supposed to derive considerable profits from the duties levied on pilgrims ; it will not, therefore, be advisable at the present moment to interrupt the system which prevails for the collection of those duties. * * * *

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committed any mistake, then life suddenly returned to the dull inert mass, and complaints were loud and incessant."

How does this compare with the Governor-General's statement to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors ?

* Similar to the proclamation issued by General Harris when entering Mysore.

"You will assure the Brahmins at the Pagoda of Juggernaut, that they will not be required to pay any other revenue or tribute to the British Government than that which they may have been in the habit of paying to the Maratha government, and that they will be protected in the exercise of their religious duties. * * * *

"I have reason to believe that a considerable proportion of the province of Cuttack is occupied by chieftains or zemindars who have been enabled by the weakness of the Maratha government to render themselves independent of the Maratha power, or who yield to it a partial obedience. Considerable tracts of country contiguous to that province are also possessed by chieftains, who acknowledge no superior authority, or who are merely tributary to the Maratha State. I deem it necessary that such of those chieftains or zemindars as are subjects of the Maratha government, and have revolted, should be required to acknowledge subjection to the British power. With other chieftains who many possess means of embarrassing your progress, it may be advisable to negotiate engagements on terms favourable to their interests, without requiring their absolute submission to the British authority."

From the above, the intriguing nature of the Company's Servants is quite evident. The Governor-General relied on intrigues rather than arms for the acquistion of the province of Orissa. The English were not entering that province as conquerors, but professedly as friends to deliver its inhabitants from the alleged tyrannies and oppressions of the Marathas. To gain their object, they did not scruple to act on Machiavellian maxims. That Italian thinker wrote that

"the sagacious politicians will always respect religion, even if he have no belief in it, since there have been frequent proofs that through inculcating it even by craft, much valor has been roused for the defence of the country."

The very pious "Christian" Governor-General acted on this maxim and so instructed the officer who was to carry on military operations in Orissa to show every respect to the idolatrous practices of the Hindus at Juggernaut.

Machiavelli wrote:

"Men are all the readier to throw themselves into your arms, the less you appear disposed to compel them, and the more you show yourself humane and familiar with them, the less they dread you as regards their liberty."

It was on this maxim then, that the Governor-General instructed the commandant of the forces in Orissa to intrigue with the chieftains and natives of that province. So it was not the atrocities, tyrannies and oppressions alleged against the Marathas which paved the way to the acquisition of Orissa by the British as the intrigues of the latter on Machiavellian lines. Accordingly when they

"appeared on the scene, the Marathas were left to fight their own battles, quite unsupported by the people."

It was not Colonel Campbell who went to acquire Orissa, but Colonel Harcourt.* He marched from Ganjam on the 8th September, 1803, at the head of the 1st Madras Fusileers and two Madras regiments and took possession of Manickpatam on the 14th and of the City of Jagannath, known also as Puri, on the 18th September, 1803. He

* The former having been seized with an illness which threatened his life, Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt was appointed to act in his stead.

accomplished this without fighting and bloodshed. On the same date, he wrote to Captain Armstrong, who was on the staff of the Governor-General:

"I beg you will be pleased to state to his Excellency the Most Noble the Governor-General, that we have this day taken possession of the city of Jaggernaut.

"Upon application from the chief Brahmins of the Pagoda, I have afforded them guards (of Hindus) and a most satisfactory confidence is shewn by the Brahmins, priests, and officers of the Pagoda, and by the inhabitants of Jaggernaut, both in their present situation, and in the future protection of the British Government."

So the intrigues on Machiavellian lines produced the desired result.

A detachment was also sent from Calcutta to carry on their operations on Machiavellian lines in the northern portion of Orissa under the sovereignty of the Raja of Berar. This detachment was 1,000 strong and was under the command of Captain Morgan and Lieut. Broughton and sailed for Balasore. Another detachment was sent under Colonel Fergusson to Jellasore to protect the Bengal Frontier. Captain Morgan's detachment, writes Mr. J. Beames,

"arrived in three ships, and landed at Jampada near Gabgaon, a village adjoining old Balasore on the east, and almost three miles below the present town. They were in want of provisions, which were supplied to them by Prahlad Nayak, Zamindar of old Balasore. They then advanced along the bank of the river, and owing probably to the difficult nature of the ground, were not opposed by the Marathas till they got close to Balighat just below Barabati. Here a band of horsemen bore down on them, and in the skirmish which ensued, one European soldier was killed. The English then rushed forward and attacked the Maratha fort, which stood on the site of the salt gola, and soon took possesssion of it. The Marathas appear to have made but a faint resistance, and quickly disappeared. Immediately after this, a drum was beaten in all the bazaars announcing that the English had taken possession of the province and would protect all who behaved themselves peaceably. . .

"The date of the capture of Balasore is 21st September, 1803."

The news of the capture of Balasore reached Lieut.-Colonel Harcourt before he arrived at Katak. He wrote a letter dated Burpurushuttumpur, 25 miles south of Katak, 3rd October, 1803, congratulating Captain Morgan on his success.

After taking possession of Jagannath Colonel Harcourt directed his attention to capture Katak. In the despatch of the Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors dated October 31, 1803, it is stated that

"the inundated state of the country prevented the march of the army under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Harcourt from Juggernaut, until the 24th of September. During the first day's march, the advanced corps of the army were several times engaged with parties of the enemy's troops, who were repulsed with loss.

"An action subsequently took place between an advanced detachment of the British troops and a party of the enemy near Muckundpore in which the latter was defeated with considerable loss.

"No further resistance was opposed to the progress of the British army until its arrival at Cuttack on the 10th of October, but the inundated state of the country and the rise of the rivers greatly retarded the march of the troops.

"The town of Cuttack was immediately occupied by the British troops without opposition."

Operations were then begun for the reduction of the Fort of Katak, named Barabutty. In his despatch to Captain Armstrong, Military Secretary to the Governor-General, dated Katak, Octr. 15th, 1803, Colonel Harcourt described the manner in which the reduction of that fort was brought about. He wrote.

"that the fort of Barabutty had been taken by assault by a part of the troops under my command, directed to perform this service under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Clayton, of the 20th Bengal Regiment. . . .

"On the night of the 12th a spot was fixed on for a twelve-pounder battery, distant about 500 yards from the outer gate of the fort. This battery was completed on the night of the 13th, and the twelve-pounder placed in it, together with two howitzers and two six-pounders, the whole of which opened their fire on the morning of the 14th. By eleven o'clock in the forenoon most of the defences on the south face of the fort, against which our fire was directed, were taken off, the enemy's guns silenced and every appearance promised success: upon which I directed Lieutenant-Colonel Clayton to advance with one six-pounder, and a party of artillery men, 200 Europeans from his Majesty's 22nd, and the Madras European regiment, and 400 sepoys from the 20th Bengal, and the 9th and 19th regiments of Madras Native Infantry. The party had to pass over a narrow bridge, and under a very heavy but ill-directed fire of musketry from the fort, to which they were exposed for forty minutes. They at length succeeded in blowing open the wicket, . . . Having once accomplished this, the party entered singly, and although they met with considerable resistance whilst entering the fort, and passing two other gates, the British troops were soon completely victorious. . . .

"The fort of Barabutty is of considerable strength, and with the exception of the bridge over which our party passed, is inaccessible, as it is surrounded by a ditch from 35 to 135 feet broad, and 20 feet depth of water in it."

That such a strong fort could have been so easily reduced by the British officers, shows that there were traitors among those who had been entrusted with its defence.

With the reduction of the Fort of Barrabutty, ended all military operations in Orissa. But we have not as yet fully dealt with the doings of Captain Morgan. That officer, after occupying Balasore, detached, on the 30th of September, two companies under the command of Lieutenant Slye to Soroh, twenty miles south of Balasore, for the purpose of dislodging a party of the enemy stationed near that place, and of opening the communication in the direction of Katak. On the 1st of October the detachment under the command of Lieutenant Slye attacked and defeated the enemy which was posted at a village a short distance north of Soroh, and the troops of the enemy stationed at Soroh subsequently retreated to the southward. The detachment under Lieutenant Slye having been reinforced by another company from Balasore occupied Soroh on the 3rd of October without further opposition.

On the 4th of October the whole of the detachment under the command of Colonel Fergusson, arrived at Balasore without any opposition.

On the 10th of October the detachment under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Fergusson marched from Balasore in consequence of orders from the Governor-General, directing that officer to proceed for the purpose of forming a junction with the army under the command of Colonel Harcourt at Katak; and on the 15th of October that detachment arrived near Budruck, a village situated near halfway between Balasore and Katak.

According to Beames, the first efforts of these officers

"were to learn the geography of the Moharbhanj and Nilgiri Hills, especially the passes and to open communications with the Rajas of those two states. Spies were sent into Moharbhanj and Nilgiri to keep a watch on the chiefs, and passports were to be granted to their vakeels or representatives, should they desire to visit Cuttack.

"Soroh was abandoned and the detachment under Lieutenant Slye marched to Jajpore in

November. . . . The Moharbhanj Rani was at this time, apparently half afraid to come in, and half disposed to be turbulent. Harcourt writes frequent letters to him (? her), and enjoins on Morgan the necessity of extremely conciliatory conduct to him (? her). . . . Moharbhanj, however, does not appear to have quieted down, and two companies of infantry, one from Balasore and one from Jellasore, were sent to Hariharpur 'to promote the peace and transquility of the Mohurbundge district.' Further instructions are to the following effect :

'Having cause to believe that the Rani of Mohurbundge and her adopted son Te-Koit* are both desirous of the protection of the British Government being extended to them, you will direct the officer proceeding to Huriharpore in command of a detachment, to conduct himself towards the Ranee and Te-Koit, or their vakeels, with every mark of friendly attention. He may open any necessary communication with them, but *you will be pleased to enjoin him to avoid committing himself by any promises or agreement that may be construed by them as binding on the British authorities in Cuttack.*' "

The sentence put in italics needs no comment. It clearly indicates the perfidious character of the Company's servants. They obtained a portion of territories dependent on Mayurbhanj by fraud.

By the capitulation of Sambalpur on the 12th January, 1804, the whole of Orissa then forming part of the Maratha Empire came into the hands of the British. The acquisition of Orissa by them can hardly be called 'a conquest.' The Oriyas at least can certainly by no means be designated as a conquered people.

* Te-Koit is Tikait, one bearing the tika (tilaka) or mark of sovereignty, and is the usual title of the heir-apparent to a throne.

CHAPTER XXX.

ACQUISITION OF BUNDELKHAND

The British came to possess the province of Bundelkhand by the supplemental articles to the Treaty of Bassein drawn up under date 16th December, 1803. That province belonged to the Peshwa and he was induced to part with it in lieu of Savanoor and Benkapoor in the Southern Maratha country, and Oolpar in the neighbourhood of Surat—all of which were included in the cessions made by the Treaty of Bassein. From its situation in the neighbourhood of their position on the Jumna Bundelkhand was extremely important to the British. But the province could not be obtained without expelling certain chieftains who, though tributary to the Peshwa, were averse to place themselves under the yoke of the British. Hence for the acquisition of the province, an expedition was necessary. From Allahabad, a detachment of troops under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Powell crossed the Jumna and entered Bundelkhand on the 6th September, 1803. The detachment under Colonel Powell could not have so easily accomplished the occupation of Bundelkhand, had not a soldier of fortune, named Gosain Himmut Bahadur, offered his services to the British and shown the way in which they could easily acquire the province. The offer of this man (or rather traitor) was accepted and he joined the British with a large body of troops, on the 16th September. There was no difficulty in reducing the petty chieftains and their forts in the province. But the nominal ruler of the province, Shamshere Bahadur, still held out, and so the united forces of the British and Himmat Bahadur crossed the river Cane on the 10th October and on the 13th found the army of Shamshere Bahadur drawn up to oppose them. There was a battle fought, but Shamshere Bahadur was easily defeated, and he evacuated the province by his retreat and crossing the river Betwa.

The acquisition of Bundelkhand by the British cannot be looked upon as a conquest by them. It was ceded to them by the Peshwa in compliance with the articles of the Treaty of Bassein.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE WAR IN THE NORTH.

In the North, General Lake was entrusted with invading Sindhia's dominions. Mahadji Rao Sindhia had acquired the fertile provinces situated in the valley between the Ganges on the East and the Jumna on the West, comprising Agra, Aligarh and Delhi. He had placed De Boigne in civil and military administration of his newly acquired territories. On the death of Mahadji Sindhia and on the departure of De Boigne for Europe, M. Perron held charge of these territories. Sindhia, of course, held these territories under the nominal authority of the Mughal Emperor of Delhi. Lake, as said before, was directed to secure the person of the Delhi Emperor and to wrest from Sindhia all his possessions in Hindustan. Long before the formal declaration of the war on Sindhia, the British had been busily engaged in conspiring and intriguing with Sindhia's tributaries and subjects. So it was an easy affair for Lake to capture Sindhia's strongholds in Hindustan, and walk over, as it were, to Delhi and secure the person of the Emperor.

General Wellesley had been authorized to conclude peace with, or declare war upon, Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. As said before, that gallant General preferred war to peace and his memorandum of the 6th August, 1803, set forth the pretexts for unjustly going to war with Sindhia. General Wellesley's Memorandum of the 6th did not reach the Governor-General till the 23rd August, 1803. On its receipt, he wrote a secret letter to Lieut-General Lake, dated Fort William, August 24th, 1803, forwarding copies of General Wellesley's Memorandum. The Governor-General wrote:

"The documents now transmitted will, however, sufficiently indicate to Your Excellency the necessity of prosecuting, with the utmost activity and despatch, the system of military operations and political arrangements described in my several letters addressed to Your Excellency previously to the 10th instant.

"Your Excellency will, therefore, proceed in the war against Dowlat Rao Sindhia without delay or interruption, unless you should receive official advices of the conclusion of peace in the Deccan, or unless Major-General Wellesley should signify to Your Excellency his desire that offensive operations should cease in the north-western countries of Hindustan."

Again, on the 26th August, the Governor-General wrote another secret letter to the Commander-in-Chief in India. He wrote:

"I have the honor to enclose for Your Excellency's notice copy of a letter received this day from Major-General Wellesley, together with its enclosures, by a reference to which Your Excellency will observe that hostilities must have commenced against Scindhia and the Raja of Berar in the Deccan, at the close of the first week of this month."

Lake was fully prepared for the war against Sindhia. On the 7th of August, he marched from Cawnpur and reached the Company's frontier on the 28th. He lost no time in pushing on to and invading Sindhia's territories. On the 29th August, 1803, without much difficulty he occupied Coel, the frontier town of Sindhia. This is not to be wondered at when we remember that the European officers and men in the employ

of Sindhia betrayed their master. The conspiracies and intrigues which the Governor-General had set afoot, were now bearing their desired effect. On the day of the occupation of Coel, *i. e.*, 29th August, 1803, General Lake wrote a "private" letter to the Marquess Wellesley, in which he said :

"I am convinced the day has had a most wonderful effect upon the minds of the natives, who always thought M. Perron invincible ; indeed, I have every reason to believe that some of his confederates left him the moment they heard of our approach, particularly the Jauts, and few Sikhs which are reported to have been with him ; and I think most of the others have gone to their homes, and never will encounter us again. . . . Six officers of Perron's second brigade are just come in, having resigned the service even before they knew of the proclamation."

Could there be any doubt after reading the above, that there was no hope for Sindhia to successfully oppose the British, since his camp was reeking with traitors ? Lake did not mention in his "private" letter, that the conspiracies and intrigues which the Governor-General had set afoot had been successful in detaching the European officers and men from Sindhia's service and also betraying Sindhia.

After occupying Coel, Lake turned his attention to capture the fort of Aligarh. Dating his letter, marked "Private", from Camp at Coel, Sept. 1, 1803, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :

"I have not yet moved from hence, nor am I in possession of the fort of Allyghur ; *my object is to get the troops out of the fort by bribery, which I flatter myself will be done.* My reason for gaining it this way, proceeds from a wish to expedite matters, and save the troops. The place is extremely strong, and if regularly besieged, will take a month at least. It attempted to be gained by a *coup de main*, I think we must lose men, but I am at present adverse to this mode of attack, . . . Therefore, if by a little money, I can save the lives of these valuable men, Your Lordship will not think I have acted wrong, or been too lavish of cash."

Lake, however, did not succeed in getting the troops out of the fort by bribery. But it is within the bounds of possibility, nay probability, that a large number of Sindhia's troops within the Fort of Aligarh had been seduced by the British to betray Sindhia's interests and turn traitors. Although these troops did not apparently desert Sindhia's colours, they were not faithful to their master. Man is naturally weak and therefore beautiful is the utterance of Christ in which he taught his followers to daily pray to God, "Father, lead us not into tempations, but deliver us from evils." What are we to think of the followers of Christ in India who led non-Christians into temptations by bribing them to betray their sovereigns ? To the credit of Sindhia's non-Christian subjects, it must be said that most of them did not prove faithless to him and were not bought over by gold as were the Christian officers and men in Sindhia's employ.

When Lake perceived that it was useless to try to seduce Sindhia's troops to betray the Fort at Aligarh, he determined to capture it by assault. It was not difficult for him to do so. Some of those European officers and men who had deserted Sindhia were only too ready to betray their late master whose salt they had eaten for so many years. Amongst these faithless men there was one named Lucan, who pointed out the weak points of the Fort at Aligarh. . . . . .

Dating his letter from Head Quarters, Camp Aligarh, Sept. 4, 1803, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :

"It is with inexpressible satisfaction that I have the honour to report to Your Lordship, the capture of the Fort of Allyghur this morning by assault.

"Having spent some days in fruitless endeavours to save the unnecessary effusion of blood, on finding that the natives persisted obstinately in their determination of resistance, and rejected every overture I made, I found myself under the necessity of determining on some decisive measure, and after maturely considering the probability of success with the obstacles that opposed us, I judged it preferable to carry it by assault, than to lose time by the slower operations of a siege."

It is questionable if the gallant General would have determined on an assault, had he not possessed the services of a European traitor once in the employ of Sindhia, ready to betray his late master. Regarding the services rendered by this traitor, General Lake wrote :

"I feel I shall be wanting in justice to the merits of Mr. Lucan, an officer, a native of Great Britain, who lately quitted the service of Scindhia, to avoid serving against his country, were I not to recommend him to Your Lordship's particular attention. He gallantly undertook to lead Colonel Monson to the gate, and point out the road through the fort, which he effected in a most gallant manner, and Colonel Monson has reported having received infinite benefit from his services. If you deem him worthy of any mark of Your Excellency's favour, it will afford me great satisfaction, if his services are rewarded by Government."

Sindhia's troops, however, fought as bravely as possible. The Commander-in-Chief felt bound to bear testimony to their courage. He wrote to the Governor-General :

"As I told Your Lordship in my letter of the 1st instant, I had tried every method to prevail upon these people to give up the fort, and offered a very large sum of money, but they were determined to hold out, which they did most obstinately and I may say most gallantly."

But the bravery and courage of Sindhia's troops were of no avail. They were no match for the fraud and underhand practices of the Europeans, since the gold of the latter had raised traitors in their ranks. So the fall of Aligarh was very easily effected.

With the fall of Aligarh Perron left Sindhia's service. Although an adventurer, he seems to have possessed more sense of honor than any other European employee of Sindhia, for he did not betray his master. Regarding this, Mill writes :

"Perron might have received a large sum of money, had he bargained for his own retirement, and transferred to the English any considerable portion of the military resources with which he was intrusted. Perron retired, without bargaining at all : and, although he had the greatest cause of resentment against his employer, he left, without transferring to his enemies the smallest portion of the resources with which he was intrusted."*

But the same cannot be said of the other European adventurers. The reason for Perron's leaving Sindhia was not so much ill usage, which it is alleged he received at the hand of his employer, as the disgust with which he was filled at the treachery and ingratitude of his European comrades. According to the Governor-General,

"M. Perron stated, that his reason for retiring proceeded from his having received intelligence that his successor had been appointed; and was actually on his way to take possession of his new

* VI, p. 352.

charge. M. Perron also observed, that *the treachery and ingratitude of his European officers convinced him that further resistance to the British arms was useless.'"**

After the fall of Aligarh and the desertion of Perron and other European adventurers it was very easy for Lake to march on to Delhi. He left Aligarh and marched on to, and occupied Kaunga without any resistance. It seems that he bribed the people to betray the fort. His 'private' letter, dated September 8, 1803, to the Governor-General, from Kaunga, throws much light on the manner in which secret service money was freely expended to corrupt people. He wrote:

"We arrived here (Kaunga) this morning, and found a very strong little fort, which would have caused delay and trouble had not the troops evacuated it the day after the fall of Alighur, when they declared they would not wait for our attack; I trust this idea prevails throughout the country. . . . .

"*I think when you hear the SECRET manner in which things have been conducted you will be much pleased, it is quite a new work in the army, and has succeeded hitherto wonderfully well.* I think to be very near Dehli in three more marches."

The ease with which the people could often be bribed shows their degeneracy and lack of patriotism.

There was no difficulty to march on to Delhi. It was not the wish of the Governor-General that Lake should proceed to Delhi. The former had urged him to concentrate a force between Agra and Koil and to advance a force from Etawa against Gwalior

* But, writes a correspondent in the *Pioneer* of 4th September, 1903, on the occasion of the centenary of Aligarh:

"The Fort of Aligarh, lying near the city of Koel, half-way between Agra and Delhi, was strongly held by M. Perron, the French adventurer commanding Scindhia's forces. This M. Perron, whose house, by the way, still stands at Aligarh, administered the district and drew his revenues therefrom, having succeeded the Savoyard, M. de Boigne, one of the most remarkable men who ever served in Hindustan.

"As Lake advanced from Cawnpore, in August 1803, M. Perron mustered his forces and determined to make a stand at the Fort; but in spite of the strength of his position he seems to have behaved in an odd fashion. He handed the command over to a subordinate, one Pedron, enjoining him on his honour as a Frenchman to hold out to the last and himself retired to Hathras to await the issue of events. Lake had with him five hundred men of H. M.'s 76th Regiment of Foot, three battalions of Sepoy's and a few guns. The attack was quick and decisive. Leutenant Lucan led a storming party against the front gate, which was rushed and carried, though at the cost of many lives, and the evening of the 4th September found Lake in possession of a stronghold, which all Hindustan had deemed impregnable. There was no vain-gloryling in his 'despatch, which said: 'From the extraordinary strength of the place, in my opinion, British valour never shone more conspicuous.'

"This blow, followed in less than one month by the victory of Laswarry, settled the fate of Northern India and disposed of Scindhia and M. Perron, who was now regarded by his former friends as a traitor. His conduct had certainly been strange. Perhaps he lost his head in those days of Lake's advance; perhaps, for all the strength of his Fort, he foresaw the end. Anyhow, it is asserted that he had "savings" to a considerable amount invested in the funds of the East India Company.

"The breaches made by Lake's guns and the front gate that Lucan battered have long ago been rebuilt, and the Fort slumbers idly through the tireless days like an old greybeard by the way side when his life's work is done, resting and waiting. Local tradition says—and solemnly the chowkidar, the solitary householder there, will assert it—that the boom of guns is often heard at night.

and also to advance against Saharanpur from Amroa. Had the Governor-General's plan been carried out, Sindhia would have been utterly crushed, for then the war would have been carried to the very heart and capital of his dominions. But Lake was not prepared for this. His plan was not to attack Gwalior but move on to Delhi. The reason for Lake's moving on to Delhi instead of attacking Gwalior appears to be that he expected help from the Mughal Emperor at Delhi and thus was almost certain of the success of his undertaking. It has already been mentioned before, that the Governor-General had opened intrigues with Shah Alam and means had been found to convey to him the Governor-General's letter. To this letter a secret answer from Shah Alam was received by Lake on the 29th August, 1803, *i. e.*, the day on which Koil was taken. Hence, the Commander-in-Chief altered the plan which the Governor-General had ordered him to execute. It is the testimony of all historians that Lake was no tactician or brilliant and brave general. He depended more on good luck and bribery and other questionable means which he designated as "the secret manner for conducting things" for his success than upon his ability as a sound general. In Ireland, Lake had been a failure as a general. Mr. Stead (*Review of Reviews*, July, 1898) writes:

"The last act of the 'Rebellion' of 1798 was the sudden and unexpected arrival of Colonel Humbert with three ships and 1,000 Frenchmen at Killala, which they occupied August 22nd. Humbert, taking with him 800 of his own men, who were joined by 1,500 Irish, marched westward, and on the 28th attacked and defeated General Lake, who had 6,000 men under his command, at Castlebar. The route of the British troops was so precipitate that the Races of Castlebar became a byeword from that day in Connaught."

This disaster was retrieved by Lord Cornwallis.

One would have thought that Lake would, after such a signal failure as that mentioned above, have been the last man to be appointed to the responsible office of the Commander-in-Chief in India. If Lake was a failure as a general, in Ireland he nevertheless loyally carried out the policy of the Government of the day. Mr. Stead, in his Centenary of 1798, calls Lake "a truculent ruffian." It was the policy of the Government under Pitt in England, and his representative Lord Castlereagh in Ireland to provoke the Irish to rebellion. "Lord Castlereagh," writes Mr. Stead, "found in General Lake a pliant instrument for his designs."

Lake's appointment in India was to be attributed to the fact that Lord Castlereagh whose "pliant instrument" he was in Ireland, afterwards succeeded Dundas as the chief for the affairs of India. Moreover, Pitt was still the Prime Minister, whose policy to provoke the Irish to revolt was loyally carried out by Lake by "free rape" of the native women of Ireland.

In his letter dated September 12, 1803, Lake stated his reasons for moving on to Delhi, instead of attacking Gwalior and thus carrying out the instructions of the Governor-General. He wrote to the Governor-General :

"Allow me to state my reasons for coming on to Delhi, which were as follows:—I had certain information that Louis was making all the use possible of the King's name, and of his royal prerogative, and I thought it most probable that many persons with the concealed design of taking advantage of the present times, but absolutely in obedience to the King's mandate, might either join Louis or spread over the Company's provinces for the sake of plunder. Another reason for coming

to Delhi was, considering the character of M. Louis more active, and perhaps more zealous than M. Perron and considering also his personal connection with the Sikhs, I was decidedly of opinion, that the crushing of these political intrigues, and the subversion of his French connection were primary objects, and that nothing would be so likely to accomplish the above objects as the sudden appearance of the army at the capital of Delhi, . . . Another consideration was, that if the enemy were active, vigorous, and enterprising, our provinces are much at his mercy; the movement of my army to Agra might save the lower part of the Doab, but the upper part, together with Rohilcund, would have been exposed to the depredations of Louis's detachment, and as he possessed Saharanpore, and probably expected co-operation from the Rohillas, he would probably have overrun Rohilcund with greater facility than Perron could carry his depredations to any considerable extent."

But the real reason which prompted him to move on to Delhi, as said above, was his successful intrigue with Shah Alam. Delhi was not entered till a battle was fought with M. Louis Borguin, who was in command of Sindhia's troops at Delhi. As was to be expected, Lake was victorious. The victory could not have been obtained but for the treachery of some of the troops under Louis. It is probable that Shah Alam, who had been intriguing with the British, had also taken steps to corrupt the troops under Louis. Anyhow Lake got the credit of defeating Louis. The battle was fought on the 11th September, 1803. On the same date at half-past seven p. m. General Lake wrote to the Governor-General :

"I have the satisfaction to inform Your Lordship, that after a march of eighteen miles this morning, I learnt that the enemy in great force under M. Louis, had crossed the Jumna from Delhi, with the intention of attacking us.

"When we have encamped, we found our outposts were attacked by a body of the enemy. On reconnoitring to our front, I found that the enemy's whole army were drawn up in order of battle. I immediately ordered out the whole line, and advanced to attack them in front.

"The enemy opposed to us a tremendous fire from a numerous artillery, which was uncommonly well served, and caused us considerable loss in officers and men, but I have the satisfaction to add, that our advance under a most heavy cannonade, and actual charge of the enemy, at about one hundred paces distant, caused a most precipitate retreat, and left in our possession the whole of their artillery.

"The cavalry pursued the fugitives to the Jumna, making great havock, and numbers were drowned in attempting to cross. . . .

"The whole army was under arms from three this morning till this moment."

Reading the above, it is impossible for us not to suspect that the ease with which Lake obtained his victory was mainly due to the intrigue which had been opened with Shah Alam, who must have taken steps to corrupt the army opposed to Lake.

The fall of Delhi was now accomplished and Lake went to pay his respects to the Titular Emperor on the 16th September, 1803, who was induced to formally make over the empire of his ancestors to the English. When the latter opened their intrigue with His Majesty, he naturally expected that the Empire of which his ancestors held the sceptre would be made over to him. Although His Majesty knew perfectly well the perfidious conduct of the servants of the East India Company and declared an apprehension "lest when they gain possession of the country they may prove forgetful of him," yet His Majesty played into their hands and fell into the snare laid by them for him. He materially helped them in capturing Delhi and without his assistance, it is questionable if the fall of Delhi would have been so easily accomplished.

Lake settled Delhi by appointing Colonel Ochterlony as Resident and to hold the Cheif Command at Delhi. For the purpose of garrisoning the place, he left one battalion and four companies of native infantry, with a corps Mewaties which had been newly raised under the command of those Europeans who had quitted the service of Sindhia.

Having made these arrangements Lake left Delhi on the 24th September, 1803, and marched on to Agra. That place held out for some time and there was some desultory fighting for some days. But the "secret manner in which things" were conducted by Lake made the men in Sindhia's service, amounting to about 2,500, transfer their services to the English Commander and march into his camp. The fort at Agra also fell into his hands as the garrison capitulated on the evening of the 17th October, on terms of safety to their persons and private property.

One other memorable battle had to be fought on the plains in the vicinity of Agra before Lake's campaign against Sindhia was brought to a close in the North. This was the battle of Laswari. How this battle was brought about will be understood by the following extract from General Lake's letter marked "Private" to the Marquess Wellesley, dated Camp Kerowly, October 28th, 1803. He wrote:

"I had intended to have marched immediately towards Gwalior, and in my way to the Chumbal to have destroyed the remains of some of Duderneg's brigade in that direction; but upon finding the day before yesterday that they had begun their march to this side, I determined to intercept them, which I have not been able to do exactly; and I have been obliged to halt this day for a very heavy fall of rain last night, that made the roads so bad as to prevent my moving this morning. I shall march to-morrow morning, and hope very shortly to be able to give a very good account of them, it is not clear what their intention is, except plundering the country, whether they incline to go towards Delhi or Jeypore, whichever route they take, we shall soon be with them. *They have no leader, and one day they talk of coming in to us, another day they have some other scheme, and no one will take them into their service, consequently they cannot exist long. They are very few in number, and short, I believe, of ammunition, therefore, Your Lordship need not be the least uneasy about them.*......The moment I have settled these gentry, if Ambajee does not give up Gwalior, I shall turn my hand that way, and have little doubt of its being an easy conquest."

It was under these circumstances that the battle of Laswari was fought. There was every advantage on the side of the British, while Sindhia's troops who remained loyal and faithful to their master labored under many disadvantages, since the 'secret manner in which things had been conducted' by General Lake had raised traitors in their camp. It was a foregone conclusion then, that the loyal and faithful troops of Sindhia would sustain defeat. And the events proved this.

On the 1st November, 1803, General Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"I have the honor to inform your Excellency, that I marched from Agra the 27th ultimo, in pursuit of the Mahratta force, which was composed of the brigades which had been detached from the Deccan in the early part of the campaign, and of a few battallions which had effected their escape from Delhi. I was the more anxious to defeat this corps from its being furnished with a numerous artillery. Owing to the detention the army met with from a heavy fall of rain, it was not until the 29th that it reached a camp to the west-ward of Puttipoor. From intelligence I received here of the rapid manner in which the Mahratta army was moving, I determined to leave

the heavy artillery, with a proper detachment of infantry for its protection, and to pursue the enemy by forced marches, in the hope of being able the more speedily to come up with him. On the 31st, the army encamped at a short distance from the ground which the enemy had quitted the same morning. Possessed of this intelligence, I resolved to make an effort to overtake him with all the cavalry of the army, in the intention of delaying him by a light engagement, until the infantry should be able to come up. To this end the cavalry marched at twelve last night, and having performed a distance of more than forty miles in twenty-four hours, came up with the enemy this morning soon after day-break. From the sudden manner in which I came upon the enemy I ventured to make an attack with the cavalry alone, supported by the mounted artillery, but finding him too advantageously posted to hope for complete success without too much risk, I drew the cavalry out of reach of cannon shot, and waited the arrival of the infantry. Soon after their arrival, I made a general attack upon the enemy's position, the result of which I have the satisfaction of informing your Excellency has been a complete, though I sincerely lament to add, dear bought victory. The enemy were totally defeated, with the loss of all their cannon, tumbrils, and baggage; ......"

Thus was fought the Battle of Laswari which Colonel Malleson calls one of the decisive battles of India. It would have decided, nay, sealed and doomed the fate of the British in India, had not there been traitors in the camp of Sindhia who had been bought over by the gold of the English and did not scruple to betray their master. That those troops of Sindhia who were faithful to their salt fought bravely, is borne testimony to by even Lake. In his letter marked 'Secret' dated Camp Laswari, November 2nd, 1803, he wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"These fellows fought like devils, or rather heroes, and had we not made a disposition for attack in a style that we should have done against the most formidable army we could have been opposed to, I verily believe, from the position they had taken, we might have failed."

But notwithstanding their gallantry, Sindhia's troops were beaten, because they had been deserted in a critical hour by their leaders. For Lake wrote,

"if they had been commanded by French officers, the event would have been, I fear, extremely doubtful. I never was in so severe a business in my life or anything like it, and pray to God I never may be in such a situation again."

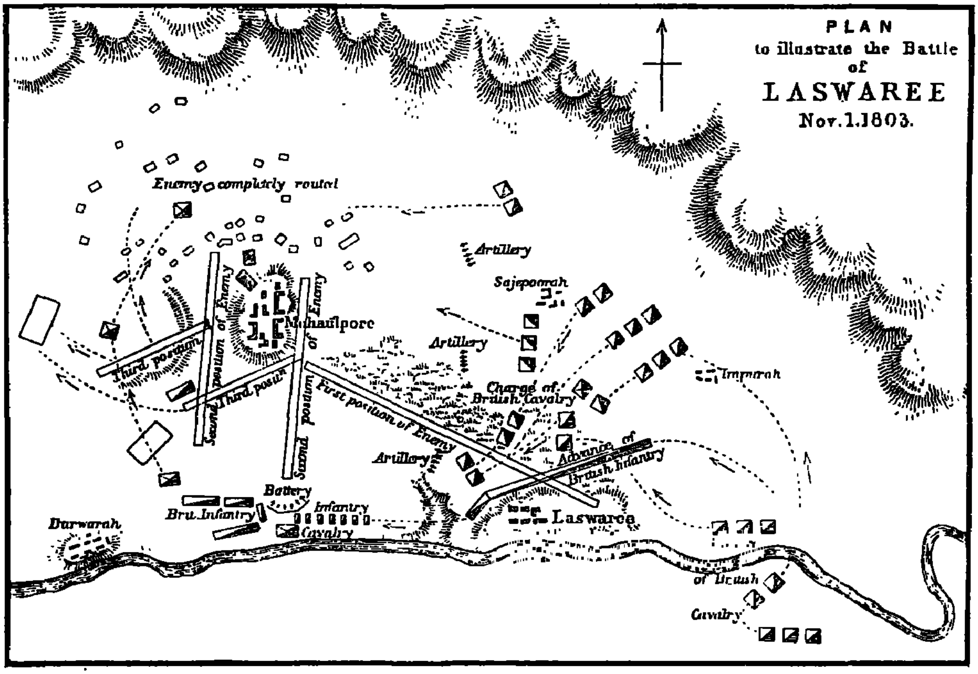
Lake had now executed all the orders of the Governor-General, except capturing Gwalior. So he wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"I feel happy in having accomplished all your wishes, except Gwalior, which I trust we shall get possession of by treaty with Ambajee, the fall of these brigades will bring him to terms immediately."

Lake, however, did not proceed to Gwalior. The reason for his not doing so is given in his letter to the Marquess Wellesley marked "Private," and dated Camp, Laswari, November 3rd, 1803. He wrote:

"I shall as soon as I can move my wounded men, begin my march towards that doubtful character, Ambajee, but I shall in the first instance proceed but slowly, as I wish to impress the the Raja of Jeypore with an idea, that, if he does not come to terms shortly, I may pay him a visit. All I mean by this is to alarm him into some decisive measure; he seems at present to be playing a very suspicious game.

The reason then for Lake not proceeding to Gwalior was that he wished to bring



PLAN
to illustrate the Battle
of
LASWAREE
Nov. 1. 1803.
Artillery
Sajepoorah
Third position
Second position of Enemy
Second Third posn
Second position of Enemy
First position of Enemy
Artillery
Charge of
British Cavalry
Artillery
Advance of
British Infantry
Battery
Infantry
Bri. Infantry
Cavalry
Darwarah
Laswaree
Cavalry

the princes of Rajputana to terms. In his "Private and Most Secret" letter to the Governor-General, dated Camp at Pahisser, November 14th, 1803, he wrote :

"I everyday experience more fully the advantages gained by the victory on the 1st, the consequences attending it are beyond all calculation ; it has quieted the country, it has brought the Raja of Jeypore and all his wicked and traitorous advisers to reason, they are now upon their march to my Camp."

But after all, General Lake did not proceed to Gwalior. With the battle at Laswari, he closed his campaign against Sindhia in the North.

The success of the British arms was not a little due to the fact that there was a severe drought in India in 1803. Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley on May 12, 1804:*

"The natives, who are extremely superstitious, say that God Almighty ordered the dry season for the purpose of our conquering Hindustan, saying that nothing can stand against the British as God fights for them. I do most sincerely agree with them, as our successes have been beyond all parallel, and must have had the assistance of an invisible hand. I cannot help offering my thanks to Providence whenever I reflect upon the operations of this campaign, which nothing but His guidance could have carried into effect.*

Wellesley Despatches, Vol. IV, p. 64.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE END OF THE WAR WITH THE CONFEDERATES.

The seed so laboriously and secretly sown by the Governor-General, in accordance with Machiavellian suggestions, had produced its harvest. It was the desire of the Marquess Wellesley to see the total destruction of Sindhia and also of the Raja of Berar. But in this, he was disappointed. It will be remembered that he had delegated the power of concluding peace with the Marathas to his brother, Major General Wellesley. But even with the treachery of the latter in fighting the battle of Argaum after declaring the armistice with Sindhia, he did not succeed in carrying out to the fullest extent, the desire of the Governor-General to totally crush Dowlat Rao Sindhia. General Wellesley thus explained the reason of his faliure in his letter, dated Camp at Rajura, 23rd November, 1803, to Major Shawe, Private Secretary to the Governor-General. He wrote:

"I have already apprized the Governor-General that it was not in my power to do anything more against Dowlat Rao Scindhia. Nothing could be done on the side of Guzerat in particular where we shall remain in possession of the most advanced station we have got, and which we hold only by one battalion; while Colonel Murray, with the remainder of his corps, is obliged to move upon Canojee Rao Guickwar.

"Scindhia has with him in the field an army of horse only. It is impossible to make any impression upon his army, unless by following it for a great length of time and distance. To do this would remove our troops still further than they are already from all the sources of supply, and would prevent the operations against the Raja of Berar, from which alone, in my opinion, we are to expect peace."

The English were now as much anxious for bringing about peace, as the Maratha confederates themselves. Accordingly, negotiations were opened and after some delay treaties of peace were drawn up. The Raja of Berar's ministers and Sindhia's ambassadors signed the treaty on behalf of their masters in December, 1803. The greedy servants of the Company amputated not like surgeons, but more like butchers. Both the confederates, Sindhia and the Raja of Berar, were robbed of their fertile provinces and the yoke of dependence on the British was imposed on their necks.

In February, 1804, another supplementary treaty was concluded with Sindhia at Burhanpur by which that Maratha prince was made to enter the system of subsidiary alliance. It was now necessary for Sindhia to enter into an alliance because he was afraid of his late antagonist, Jaswant Rao Holkar. The latter's power was not crushed and thus he could have inflicted on Sindhia, whose resources had been crippled by the war, defeats at any moment convenient to him. The Governor-General's exertions based on Machiavellian suggestions now bore fruit. He was successful beyond his expectations. Sindhia had tried to resist the imposition of the yoke of subsidiary alliance on the neck of the Peshwa. But now, he was in that helpless condition in which he solicited the British to favor him by placing the yoke of subsidiary alliance on his neck also. How

proud must the Governor-General have felt on that day when, instead of opposing, Sindhia consented to fall into the snare of the subsidiary alliance.

Mill, with his usual lucidity, has discussed the estimate of advantages from the war. He concludes by saying :

"In summing up the account of the treaty of Bassein, we can only, therefore, approach to a determinate conclusion. On the one side, there is the certain and the enormous evil, of the expenditure of the Maratha war. Whether the subsidiary alliances, which were looked to for compensation, were calculated to yield any compensation, and did not rather add to the evils, is seen to be at the least exceedingly doubtful. The policy of the treaty of Bassein cannot, therefore, be misunderstood."*

Mill's *Historv*, Vol. VI, p. 392.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE WAR WITH HOLKAR.

The peace concluded with Sindhia and the Raja of Berar did not terminate the war. If anything, it seems the treaties of peace with the Maratha confederates served to incite Holkar to hostilities with the British. There is a good deal of historical parallel between the careers of Mahadji Sindhia and Jaswunt Rao Holkar. Both played into the hands of the British. Both served to weaken and dissolve the Maratha Confederacy and thus indirectly to strengthen the hands of the British. Neither of them could be called a statesman. It is said that "Fortune smiles on bastards." This was true in the case of Mahadji Sindhia, but not in that of Jaswunt Rao Holkar. During his lifetime at least, Mahadji was considered to be a very fortunate man. He was the actual, if not the nominal Emperor of Hindustan.

But fortune can hardly be said to have smiled on Jaswunt Rao. Disasters and misfortunes dogged his steps throughout his life. Although he employed the same tactics which brought honor and glory to Mahadji, the results were most disastrous for him. His misfortunes were the natural consequences of the previous blunder of giving the servants of the Company credit for honesty and good faith, which they never possessed.

Jaswunt Rao did not join the Maratha confederates against the British. From the letter which General Wellesley had written to him,* before the war had been declared against the Raja of Berar and Sindhia, it would appear that the British had given Holkar to understand that he would be amply rewarded for his neutrality or rather treachery to the Maratha Confederates. Although no definite promises were made to Holkar in the letter which General Wellesley had written to him, yet it concluded with the following significant words :

"I send this letter in charge of Kawder Nawaz Khan, a respectable officer, who enjoys my confidence, and who will explain anything you desire to know respecting my wishes."

This letter kept Holkar quiet. Hence it is not improbable that Kadar Nawaz Khan had, on behalf of the British, given Holkar to understand that his neutrality would not be forgotten by them.

But before the war with the Maratha confederates had been over, the British had been contemplating to make war upon Holkar. Dating his letter from Camp before Gaureghar, 12th September, 1803, General Wellesley wrote to Major Shawe, Private Secretary to the Marquess Wellesley :

"I shall find a difficulty in settling with Scindhia on account of the total want of information respecting the countries which I have demanded from him. His vakeels declare that he has no countries north of the Rajputs, of which the Peishwah and Holkar have not each a third ; excepting Perron's jaghire, which he is willing to make over to the Company.

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* The letter is dated 16th July, 1803 and extracts from it have been given on a previous page.

"*Therefore, unless we make war upon Holkar, and deprive the Peishwah of his territories,* we shall not succeed in driving the Marhattas entirely from these countries, although Scindhia should cede his rights."

From the words put in italics in the above, it will be noticed why the British wanted to go to war with Holkar. But General Wellesley did not advocate war. For, he wrote:

"And I acknowledge that if this is really the state of the case, I should prefer to see Scindhia remain in the partnership, than to introduce the Company."

Had the negotiations been entrusted to General Wellesley, it is probable that the war with Holkar would have been avoided, or at all events postponed till some indefinite time. Although politics has no conscience, yet General Wellesley would have scrupled to have gone to war with Holkar, forgetting the obligations he owed to the latter for his not joining the Maratha Confederates and thus allowing the General to gain the victories of Assaye and Argaum. But the Governor-General afterwards entrusted Lake to negotiate with Holkar. Lake, as has been so often said before, was a "ruffian." His "secret manner" of conducting business was neither creditable to him nor honorable to his employers. It is more than probable that Lake's conduct provoked Holkar to hostilities.

The Governor-General was also anxious to crush Holkar. He was an ungrateful man. A sense of gratitude would have dictated him to cultivate the friendship of Holkar, for the latter had helped him in placing the yoke of the subsidiary alliance on the neck of the Peshwa and crushing Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. In a "private" letter to Lake, dated Barrackpur, November 18th, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:

"If Holkar should mix in the war, you must look to the destruction of his force as a primary object; and it may perhaps be most advisable to draw him to the northward at a distance from his resources which are very much limited. I believe his present objects to be neutrality with regard to the main contest, and plunder of every neutral power, together with pilfer of the belligerent powers."

But it was convenient now for the Governor-General to ignore the fact that Holkar had been bought over by General Wellesley by sweet words and specious and false promises. Lake, writing to the Marquess Wellesley, on the 24th November, 1803, said:

"I can not reconcile the conduct of Holker, for if he had intended hostile measures against the British Government, he might have annoyed me most seriously, and made my approach to Agra very difficult by joining the battallions that had arrived under Duderneg and Louis, instead of which he has waited till the whole of these are destroyed, one may say annihilated, and then talks of oversetting the British. I can scarcely believe it possible such an idea could have entered into his head, for by all accounts he is a shrewd, sensible man, with an extraordinary firm mind, and supposed to be ever watchful, and ready to seize a good opportunity for carrying his plans into effect; should he therefore be the man, as represnted, he surely cannot have any intention to attack us when we have the entire possession of Hindustan, the strong fortress of Agra, and very many chieftains on this side of India entirely with us."

A shrewd man like Jaswant Rao, though not a far-seeing statesman, was not like some stupid bird to be easily caught by the chaff. For his neutrality he expected some

rewards; but he was disappointed. However, he was not going to war with the British with a light heart. On the 28th December, 1803, in his "private" letter to the Marquess Wellesley, Lake wrote :

"You will receive this by express, conveying a letter from Holkar; and I feel happy to think that he means to be upon friendly terms. You may be assured that nothing shall happen on my part to cause him to alter these sentiments, but I own his actions do not appear to accord with his words. I can venture to assure your Lordship that he can do us no harm, as my frontier is too strongly guarded for any set of men to get past it. . . .

"I write in haste, that no time should be lost in sending Holkar's letter, who is so little to be depended upon, that I wish to know your Lordship's opinions and directions respecting him."

Then in a postscript, Lake wrote :

"You may depend on my watching Holkar at every turn,"

It was Lake who was desirous of crossing blades with Holkar. His very 'secret manner' in conducting things brought about the war with Holkar.

Unfortunately the Marquess Wellesley did not leave India, according to his expressed intention, by the end of the year 1803. Had he left India then, in all probability the war with Holkar would not have taken place. At the same time also the prestige of the British in India would not have suffered by the unsuccessful siege of Bharatpur. which is aptly called the "Gibraltar" of India.

On the 31st December, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote a "private and confidential" letter to Lord Castlereagh. He commenced the letter as follows :

"The state of the war with the Maratha Chiefs, and of the various depending negotiations, has determined me to remain in India, until I can bring our affairs to a favourable issue. My departure would occasion the utmost embarrassment to General Lake, to General Wellesley, and to every person concerned in the conduct of the war, or in the negotiation of peace."

He asked the permission of the Court of Directors to stay in India for an indefinite time to carry out his policy of aggression against the Marathas. His stay in India also strengthened the hands of Lake. Holkar was handed over by the Governor-General to the tender mercies of that "ruffian" Commander-in-chief in India.

The editor of the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley has not published the letters of General Lake dated the 19th, 28th and 29th December, 1803, addressed to the Governor-General regarding Holkar. The editor excused himself for their non-publication by saying,

"the letters are voluminous, and would occupy much space."

The publication of these letters would have been of great historical importance. But from the Marquess Wellesley's reply we are able to conjecture the purport of Lake's letters. Marking his letter "Secret" and dating it from Fort William, 17th January, 1804, the Governor-General wrote to Lake :

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatches under date the 19th, 28th and 29th December, 1803. . . .

"*The letters of which Jeswunt Rao Holkar has transmitted copies to your Excellency must have been forwarded to Holkar by Major-General Wellesley in his own name.* I have not addressed any letter to Jeswunt Rao Holkar, but Major-General Wellesley was authorized by my instructions of the 26th June, to open an amicable negotiation with that chieftain."

In the published despatches of the Duke of Wellington, these letters written by him to Holkar are not given. But from the words which have been put in italics in the above extract, it is evident that General Wellesley had fed the mind of Holkar with false promises and hopes in order to keep him neutral. This statement derives support from the demands which Holkar made on the British as soon as the war with the Maratha confederates had been over. He sent vakils to Lake with whom they had an interview on the 18th March, 1804, when they submitted the following proposition:

"1st, that Holkar should be permitted to collect chouth agreeably to the custom of his ancestors,

2nd, that the ancient possessions formerly held by the family, such as Etawah, &c., 12 districts between the Ganges and Jumna, and a District in Bundelcund, should be ceded to him;

"3rd, that the country of Hurriana, which was formerly in the possession of the family, should be given to him;

"4th, that the country then in his possession should be guaranteed, and a treaty should be concluded with him on the same terms as with Scindhia."

Of course, Lake did not accede to any one of these propositions. But the very fact of Holkar's venturing to make these propositions shows that he had been given to understand that his neutrality would be amply rewarded.

Grant Duff writes:

"Five or six weeks before the despatch of these wukeels to General Lake, Jeswunt Rao Holkar had addressed a letter to General Wellesley, in which he demanded from him certain districts claimed by his family in the Deccan as the condition of peace, and concluded in a strain of the most vaunting menace, in case by non-compliance it should be rendered necessary to resort to war."*

But General Wellesley had no longer the power to treat with Holkar. The Governor-General considered it expedient now to delegate that power to Lake. In his 'secret' letter to General Lake dated 17th January, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:

"It is now expedient to decide the course to be pursued with respect to Jeswunt Rao Holkar.

"The great distance of the honorable Major-General Wellesley's position from the Camp of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, must render the intercourse difficult from that quarter; and as your Excellency's situation is more likely to be convenient, for that purpose, it is my intention that your Excellency should immediately open a negotiation with Jeswunt Rao Holkar."

Jaswunt Rao Holkar had proved of great service to the British, but the Governor-General was anxious not to recognize Jaswunt Rao Holkar as possessing any status in the Maratha polity. For, he wrote to Lake:

"The authority exercised by Jeswunt Rao Holkar, in the name of Khundeh Rao, over the possession of the Holkar family, is manifestily an usurpation of the rights of Cashi Rao Holkar, the legitimate heir and successor of Tuckojee Holkar. Consistently therefore with the principles of justice, no arrangement can be proposed between the British Government and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, involving a sanction of the exclusion of Cashi Rao Holkar from his hereditary dominions."

It was convenient now for the Governor-General to talk of *rights* and *justice.* But not long before he had not only connived at but encouraged and abetted Holkar to trample under foot all principles of justice and rights of others.

In his letter he continued:

* History, p. 587.

"Under the sanction of His Highness the Peishwa's authority, the British Government would be justified in adopting measures for the limitation of Jeswunt Rao Holkar's power, and for the restoration of Cashi Rao H' lkar's rights; either by force or compromise; . . . The Peishwa may not now be anxious for the reduction of Holkar's power, or for the restoration of Cashi Rao Holkar to his hereditary rights. But it may be expected that His Hightness would readily concur in a proposition for the restoration of Cashi Rao, and for the punishment of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. . . .

"The enterprising spirit, military character, and ambitious views of Jeswunt Rao Holkar render the reduction of his power a desirable object with reference to the complete establishment of tranquility in India."

Here then a distinct note of war was sounded by the Governor-General. But Jaswunt Rao knew the storm that was brewing and had profited by the war of Sindhia with the British. Sindhia's disasters were mainly due to the treachery of his European servants. Holkar had also in his pay a few European military adventurers. As soon as he came to know that these men had been intriguing with Lake, he displayed great and genuine statesmanship by putting them to death. That was the most proper act he ever did in his life. Lake's 'secret manner' of conducting things meant in non-diplomatic language 'intrigues and conspiracies.' There is no doubt that he had been intriguing with the European servants of Holkar. The names of these men were Captains Vickars, Todd, and Ryan, and they were presumably natives of Great Britain. Grant Duff writes:

"The army in Hindustan under General Lake was still in the field to watch the motions of Holkar whose menacing position, as well as the tone of his language, the General report of his hostile intentions, and *his having put to death three officers, British subjects who wished, in consequence of these reports, to take advantage of the Governor-General's proclamation and retire from his service,* afforded strong indications of an approaching rupture."*

From the words put in italics in the above extract, there can be no doubt that the European servants of Holkar had been intriguing with Lake. We should give credit to Holkar for his great foresight in having put to death these traitors in his camp. Had Sindhia done the same before hostilities had commenced with the British he would not have been subjected to any humiliation at the hands of his enemies. That Holkar's European servants would have betrayed him had they been allowed to take advantage of the Governor-General's proclamation, there can be no doubt. That Holkar did not meet with so many disasters in his war with the British, nay, on the contrary, he kept them at bay for a long time, and discomfited them in a great variety of ways, seems to be principally due to the fact, that he had got rid of, in proper time, the European traitors in his camp.

Although the Governor-General was talking of the 'principles of justice,' and 'rights' and so on, he had no intention of just then precipitating war with Jaswunt Rao Holkar or to take the part of Kasi Rao Holkar. The Governor-General wrote to Lake, in the letter from which extracts have been given above:

"It may be further observed, that in proportion to the defect of Holkar's title, it would be his interest to abstain from any measures calculated to excite the resentment of the British Government.

"These circumstances would tend in an equal degree to preclude any combination between Jeswunt

* P. ৭৫ ;

Rao Holkar and the emissaries, or the forces of France. With a circumscribed territory and with a confined field of action, Jeswunt Rao Holkar's military power would probably decay. . . . . .

" An immediate attempt, therefore, to restore Cashi Rao Holkar to his hereditary rights, would involve more positive and certain difficulty and danger than could be justly apprehended from the continuance of Jeswunt Rao Holkar in the possession of the territories actually under his authority. A pacific conduct towards Jeswunt Rao Holkar in the present moment, will not preclude the future restoration of Cashi Rao Holkar to the possession of his hereditary rights. * * * *

"It will be necessary, however, to regulate our proceedings with respect to Jeswunt Rao Holkar in such a manner as to avoid any acknowledgment and confirmation of the legitimacy of his dominion, or of that of Khundeh Rao Holkar.

"The considerations detailed in the preceding part of this despatch have determined me not to restore Cashi Rao Holkar to the possession of his hereditary dominions, and I am also disposed to leave Jeswunt Rao Holkar in the exercise of his present authority, without any further interposition of the British power than that which may be required for the security of chiefs and states in Hindustan, with whom we have contracted defensive alliances."

The words put in italics in the above extract show the spirit in which the Governor-General wanted to make Holkar a victim of his perfidy and dishonesty. He instructed Lake that

"On the basis of the proposed arrangement, your Excellency is authorized to enter into a negotiation with Jeswûnt Rao Holkar, exercising your discretion with regard to the degree of security which we may possess under Jeswunt Rao Holkar's acquiescence in the terms of any such arrangement."

The Governor-General tried to gain his object by fraud rather than by force. He wanted to deceive and not to conquer Holkar. So he wrote to Lake:

"If Holkar's view should appear to be evidently hostile, your Excellency will judge how far it might be expedient to move against his forces. My wish is to avoid such an extremity, and if peace with Sindhia should be obtained on terms of adequate security, I should desire that the army under your Excellency's command should speedily be formed in such a manner as might effectually expedite the security and settlement of our valuable conquests and powerful alliances. . . . . .

"The British empire in India, at the close of the war with the confederate chiefs, will assume an aspect of such splendour as must daunt the most adventurous spirit of any chief or state excluded from the benefits of our protection. I am, therefore, satisfied that after the conclusion of peace with Sindhia, Jeswunt Rao Holkar, instead of attempting to encounter the British arms, will anxiously solicit the countenance and favor of our Government."

These considerations prompted the Governor-General to try and adopt a temporizing policy towards Holkar. Lake, although he outwardly professed peace, was inwardly desirous of war with Holkar. On the 4th February, 1804, he wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"I shall endeavour to avoid hostilities with Ambajee, if possible, as it appears to me if we commence a war with him and Holkar, should he choose to be inimical to us, it might bring on a war with many other powers, and lead us into a very long and perhaps a general war, which of course shall, if possible, be avoided ; at the same time *I much fear till Ambajee and Holkar are annihilated that permanent peace cannot be expected."*

The words in italics show how anxious Lake was for war. At the same time, he moved to a situation which he knew would provoke Holkar to hostilities. Dating his letter from Camp Surrouth, February 11th, 1804, he wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"I have moved on thus far on my road to take up a position near Dawsa, which will cover the passes on this side into Hindustan, *the only one in this quarter by which Holkar could pass should he be hostilely inclined;* at the same time it gives spirit and confidence in our protection to the Raja of Jeypoor of which he was most desirous."

This threatening attitude of Lake must have impressed Holkar with the belief that the British wanted to go to war with him. That the intentions of the Commander-in-Chief were anything but pacific towards Holkar, his various letters to the Governor-General distinctly show. The following extracts from his "private" letter to the Marquess Wellesley dated March 22nd, 1804, prove his hostile intentions against Holkar. For he wrote:

"That parts of our territories are certainly at present by no means in the state I could wish them, nor will they, I fear, be much better so long as Holkar's army is in existence, as many chieftains, and very particularly the Rohillas, are ready to join him if he could break into our possessions."

Again,

"I cannot divest myself of the idea, that if Holkar is not destroyed, he will as soon as the rains are over be extremely troublesome. I never was so plagued as I am with this devil; . . . That he is decidedly inimical to the English there cannot be a doubt. I feel myself in a most awkward situation respecting the robber; for if he does not come on to me, which I do not suppose he will, I cannot move on towards him, as the moment I advance and leave an opening for him, he will give me the slip, get into our territories with his horse, burn and destroy everything he comes near."

Although he was so desirous for going to war with Holkar, yet with that consummate hypocrisy of which he was a perfect master, he tried to assure the Marquess Wellesley that his intentions were pacific. For, he wrote:

"Don't, my dear Lord, from this language imagine that I shall commence hostilities with Holkar, and lead you into another war unless he comes, or till I hear from you."

At the time when he was thus making protestations of his pacific intentions, Lake discovered that Holkar had been conspiring and intriguing with the chiefs and peoples of Hindustan against the British. It is alleged that some of his (Holkar's) criminal correspondence was intercepted by Lake. Regarding the genuineness of this intercepted correspondence, we have grave doubts. Holkar must have employed men as carriers of his letters who would not have easily betrayed their trust into the hands of the British. It is a curious fact, moreover, in the history of British India that whenever the British have desired to wage war on some non-Christian power, or swallow up some non-Christian State, they have tried to justify their deeds by producing correspondence (alleged to have been intercepted) which, if genuine, would undoubtedly compromise and incriminate their enemies. We fail to understand why and how the British should always succeed in intercepting the criminal correspondence of their enemies. In some cases, the incriminating correspondence has been proved to be forgeries, So it is within the bounds of probability that the so-called intercepted correspondence of Holkar, showing his hostile designs against the British, were forgeries abetted or connived at by Lake to precipitate war with that Maratha Prince.

The antecedents of Lake would warrant us in suspecting the intercepted correspondence to have been forgeries. It is now known that in Ireland, he had provoked the

natives of that island to rebellion, which brought on the union of Ireland with Great Britain. We have so often narrated his misdeeds in Ireland, that there is very little necessity now to refer to them again.

Now, such being the character of Lake, is it improbable to believe that his so-called intercepted correspondence were forgeries committed with the intention of precipitating war with Holkar, an object which was so dear to his heart? The Governor-General was not apparently inclined to go to war with Holkar. The only way to induce him to declare hostilities against Holkar was to make him believe that the latter entertained hostile designs against the British. Nothing short of forgeries would effect this; and knowing the character of Lake, it is not unsafe to say that the so-called intercepted correspondence were forgeries.

But even if the intercepted correspondence were not forgeries, no one not blinded by prejudice and indecent partisanship would blame Holkar for trying to excite the chiefs and peoples of Hindustan against the British. Holkar was a disappointed man. He had been smarting under the wrongs and injuries he had received at the hands of the latter. If under such circumstances, remembering the treatment he had received at their hands, he in his letters to the different Hindu chiefs, called the English, as "infidel Christians," the "enemies of the Hindu faith," and "seditious men, whom they should be prepared to do distinguished services against," he had very just grounds for his opinion. No surprise need be expressed if he called on the Hindu chiefs to aid his "victorious army in taking vengeance on the ungrateful multitude" (*i. e.*, the British), or if he declared to the Musalman chiefs that "it is the object of the religion, and the rule of Musalmans that the whole body of the faithful having assembled together, be employed, heart and soul, in extirpating the profligate infidels."

This so-called intercepted correspondence produced the effect which Lake had desired; for on the perusal of this correspondence the Governor-General decided to declare war upon Holkar.

On the 4th April, 1804, in forwarding the intercepted correspondence. Lake wrote to the Governor-General:

"The conduct which Jeswunt Rao Holkar continues to pursue is so violently hostile to the British interests, and the demands preferred by his vakeels, and since repeated by his confidential servant Bhawani Shunker, are in their nature so inadmissible, and indeed insulting, considered only as propositions from Holkar to a Government whose pre-eminent rank and consequence in the empire of Hindustan, is now fully acknowledged by the other established powers, that I am fully impressed with the belief that no modified arrangement which could be formed, nor sacrifice which could be made, consistent with the honor and dignity of the British Government would satisfy the ambition of that chieftain, nor contribute to ensure to the several states of Hindustan that permanent peace and safety which it has formed a principal object of your Excellency's administration to secure to them. . . . .

"Your Excellency will have perceived that the forbearance hitherto observed towards Jeswunt Rao Holkar by the British Government, has had no effect in inducing a more friendly disposition on his part towards us, nor in altering his conduct towards our allies. . . . . The confidence which he appears to entertain of a successful commencement of hostilities with this Government, principally arises, I am inclined to believe, from the support he expects from the power and influence of several of the subjects of Government, with whom his intrigues have been successful, and from the hope of

being enabled by their assistance and junction in the Doab to create disturbances, and to distress us by the diminution of our resources and supplies.

"To frustrate any design of this nature on his part, which might certainly be attended with many distressing consequences, if attempted during the remainder of the dry season, I shall be obliged to retain this army in such a position as may cover the valuable possession of the Company in this quarter."

This was tantamount to a declaration of war with Holkar. Lake on the same date also replied to the letter from Holkar, dated the 27th March, 1804. Holkar's letter was full of sentiments quite friendly to the British. He wrote:

"* . . . It is certain that the bond of friendship does not depend upon the interchange of letters, or the observance of complimentary customs. It is proper that you should first acquaint me with the means which, after due deliberation of the consequence, you propose should be used for settling all disputes, for ensuring the welfare of the people, and establishing friendship, that I may then send to you a confidential person who shall be agreeable to both parties; considering in every respect your attachment, I have no improper views against the Company or its connections; you will, as the means of increasing our friendship, continue to favour me with your friendly correspondence."

This request of Holkar, namely, to acquaint him with the means which the British proposed should be used for settling all disputes and for establishing friendship, was a perfectly legitimate one. Had their intentions been pacific, they would have unhesitatingly acceded to it. But they were not straightforward, as they were scheming to bring about the ruin of Holkar. Lake replied to this letter on the 4th April, 1804, as follows:

"You write that it is necessary, before you send to me a confidential person who shall be agreeable to both parties, that I should acquaint you with the means which I propose should be used for settling disputes and giving peace to the country; you will have been fully informed by the contents of my former letter, . . . that those means are entirely in your own power, and depend solely on yourself. The British Government requires nothing further on your part, than you should retire to your own country, and cease to molest the allies of the Government, whom they are bound to protect, whilst they will on their part observe the same line of conduct towards you, by avoiding all interference with your country and concerns. , . . .

"From the contents of this letter it appears that you consider as an indispensable preliminary to the establishment of friendship an admission on the part of the government of unfounded claims which you must be sensible have never been submitted to by the British Government, in their political relations with any state of Hindostan or the Deccan, and which it would be derogatory to their power and dignity to listen to."

This, then, in plain language meant that there was no other mode of settling all disputes than that of an appeal to arms.

On the receipt of Lake's letter, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to him a "secret" letter, dated April 16, 1804. He wrote:

"Having fully considered your Excellency's despatches to a date as late as that of your Excellency's letter of the 4th instant, which reached me yesterday, I think it necessary to apprize your Excellency without delay, of my determination to commence hostilities against Jeswunt Rao Holkar, at the earliest practicable period of time.

* * * *

"A copy of this letter is transmitted to the honourable Major-General Wellesley on this day, together with my orders, directing him to co-operate with your Excellency from the Deccan, against the resources and power of Jeswunt Rao Holkar.

"I also forward on this day similar orders to the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, directing him to prepare Scindhia to act in concert with the British forces in Hindostan and the Deccan."

This decision of the Governor-General filled the heart of the Commander-in-Chief with joy, for he had now succeeded in inducing him to declare war on Holkar. On the 29th April, 1804, he wrote a letter marked 'private' to the Marquess Wellesley. He wrote:

"Your Lordship's despatch of the 16th instant, which I received yesterday, conveying your instructions for commencing hostilities with Jeswunt Rao Holkar, relieved my mind from the greatest anxiety, as I was much alarmed at the idea of entering into a war without your sanction, and was very fearful from the conduct of Holkar, that it would not be possible for me to avoid it; however, I have been fortunate enough to desist from action, and at the same time to alarm him sufficiently from doing any mischief."

The principal measure which the Commander-in-Chief had adopted to alarm Holkar consisted in his having advanced toward the territory of the Raja of Jaipur. He had sent a detachment under the command of Colonel Ball to Kanore, about ninety miles south-west of Delhi. Another detachment under the command of Lieut-Colonel Monson was sent on the 18th and arrived in the vicinity of Jaipur on the 21st April. This detachment consisted of three battallions of infantry and its object was to encourage the Raja of Jaipur to hold out against Holkar. These measures convinced Holkar that the British entertained hostile intentions against him. So on the 23rd April, 1804, he retreated southward, apparently with the object of completing his war-like preparations.

But as yet, war had not been formally declared against Holkar by the Governor-General. When Lake received the decision of the Marquess Wellesley on the 28th April, he was very glad to go to war with Holkar. He had thought, and he had never concealed it, that he would be able to crush Holkar without much difficulty. He had counted upon his 'secret manner' of conducting things for success. General Wellesley was also directed by the Governor-General to invade Holkar's territories. So Lake also thought, that the ability and skill of General Wellesley combined with his perfidy would contribute to the success of the undertaking. But General Wellesley was not inclined to carry out the wishes of the Governor-General or of the Commander-in-Chief.

This inability of General Wellesley has been attributed to the famine which was at that time prevailing in the Deccan. Mill writes:

"When Major-General Wellesley received instructions to begin hostilities, the Deccan was laboring under a scarcity approaching to famine. . . . . But to conduct the operations of an army, in a country totally destitute of forage and provisions, appeared to General Wellesley so hazardous, that he represented it as almost impossible for him to advance against Chandore (one of Holkar's possessions in the Deccan) till the commencement of the rains."*

But this does not appear to us to be a sufficient reason for General Wellesley's desisting from carrying out the instructions of the Governor-General. From the published correspondence of the Duke of Wellington, it seems that he was at that time dispirited and disgusted with the conduct of his brother the Governor-General's doings.

* Vol. VI, p. 401.

General Wellesley had negotiated the treaty of peace with Sindhia. He knew what interpretation the ministers of Sindhia who had signed the Treaty on behalf of their master put on the various articles of that Treaty. According to their interpretation, and it seems to have been that of General Wellesley also, Gwalior should have belonged to Sindhia. But the Governor-General thought otherwise.

It will be remembered that the Governor-General had instructed Lake to proceed to and capture Gwalior. The reasons which induced the Commandei-in-Chief not to carry out the orders of the Marquess Wellesley have already been adverted to. Lake had thought that he would succeed in gaining Gwalior by bribing the Commandant of that Fort. But in this, he was disappointed. The 'secret manner' of his conducting business did not succeed. The failure in getting Gwalior was thus rankling in the breast of the Governor-General as well as that of the Commander-in-Chief.

But according to the Treaty with Sindhia which General Wellesley had negotiated, it was understood by Sindhia's ministers that Gwalior would belong to their master. As said before, such was the view of General Wellesley as well. Major (afterwards the well-known Sir John) Malcolm had been appointed as Resident with Sindhia. He was also of the opinion that Gwalior should belong to Sindhia.

In some of the letters which he wrote to Major Malcolm at this period, General Wellesley expressed his indignation and disgust at the haggling of the Governor-General over Gwalior. On the 29th January, 1804, he wrote to Malcolm :

"If Gwalior belonged to Scindhia, it must be given up ; and I acknowledge that whether it did or did not, I should be inclined to give it to him. I declare that when I view the treaty of peace and its consequences, I am afraid it will be imagined that the *moderation of the British Government in India has a strong resemblance to the ambition of other Governments."*

In another letter to Malcolm, dated 11th February, 1804, he wrote :

"In fact, my dear Malcolm, I see very clearly that I have made two very good treaties of peace, but I have not influence to carry them into execution in any of their stipulations ; and *there is no person about the Governor-General to take an enlarged view of the state of our affairs, and to resist the importunities of the local authorities to force on the treaties a construction which will tend to the increase of their own petty power and authority.*"

Again on the 17th March, 1804, he wrote to Malcolm:

"The fair way of considering this question is, that a treaty broken is in the same state as one never made : and when that principle is applied to this case, it will be found that Scindhia, to whom the possessions belonged, before the treaty was made, and by whom they have not been ceded by the treaty of peace, or by any other instrument, ought to have them.

"In respect to the policy of the question, . . . *I would sacrifice Gwalior, or every frontier of India, ten times over, in order to preserve our credit for scrupulous good faith,* and the advantages and honor we gained by the late war and the peace ; and we must not fritter them away in arguments drawn from overstrained principles of the laws of nations, which are not understood in this country. *What brought me through many difficulties in the war, and the negotiations for peace ? The British good faith, and nothing else.*"

The sentences put in italics in the above extracts show the real state of mind of General Wellesley towards his brother's statesmanship. General Wellesley despaired of success in any future warfare, because he knew that no other native power or chief of

India would trust the English, or be imposed upon or deceived by their fraud or false promises. These thoughts dispirited and disgusted General Wellesley. On the 30th March, 1804, he wrote to Malcolm :

"I declare that I am dispirited and disgusted with this transaction beyond measure ; however, I can say no more on it. The orders are called final ; but my public letters, ... show my opinion of it."

Again, on the 13th April, 1804, he wrote to Malcolm :

"I am disgusted beyond measure with the whole concern ; and I would give a large sum to have had nothing to do with the treaties of peace, and if I could now get rid of all anxiety upon the subject. All parties were delighted with the peace, but the demon of ambition appears now to have pervaded all ; and each endeavours, by forcing constructions, to gain as much as he ean."

In such a state of mind, it was not to be expected of General Wellesley, that he would be an enthusiast in the war with Holkar.

General Wellesley was at this time much depressed in mind on account of the news he had received from England respecting his staff appointment in India. In his letter dated April 23, 1804, he wrote to Lake :

"It is with great reluctance that at a time like the present I trouble you upon a subject relating only to myself ; but I hope that the extraordinary circumstances which have induced me to trouble you, will be my excuse.

"Above a year and a half have now elapsed since my promotion to the rank of Major-General was announced in India, and since Lieut.-General Stuart, unsolicited by me, in a manner most gratifying to my feelings, recommended to the Government of Fort St. George, that I should be appointed to the staff of that Presidency. Since that period accounts have reached England that I had been appointed to the staff in the manner to which I have above alluded, and that I had the command of a body of troops employed in this country. From recent appointments made I judge that the staff in India must have been under discussion lately, and that my appointment must have drawn the attention of his royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, and of his Majesty ; but I find that no confirmation has been made or notice taken of this appointment. . . . . .

"I am therefore upon the whole very anxious to return to Europe ; and I have to request your Excellency's permission to do so. If I should obtain it, I propose to resign the appointments which I hold under the Government of Fort St. George, when an opportunity will offer for my return."

Of course, General Wellesley did not immediately leave India for England, but it is evident that he could not throw his heart and soul into the military operations which the Governor-General had ordered against Holkar. However, he tried to attack Holkar's possessions in the Deccan. He was averse to move the troops from the Deccan. On the 20th April, 1804, he wrote to Malcolm. :

"The troops to the southward shall do everything that is possible. But the General (Lake) forgets the nature of our tenure, and our present state in the Deccan ; the distance we are from Holkar ; ... *I cannot venture to move the troops from the Deccan ; . . .*"

The words put in italics in the above extract show that the real motive which prompted General Wellesley was based on political considerations. At that time Colonel Murray had been in command of British troops in Guzerat. General Wellesley instructed him to move on and attack Holkar's dominions and penetrate into Indore. He wrote :

"With your Europeans, and the remainder of your force, and the Raja's cavalry, I should wish

you to penetrate towards Indore, where you would be joined by a large proportion of Scindhia's army, and very probably I should be in communication with you with a corps from this quarter.

"According to this plan, we ought to be hanged if we do not get the better of Holkar in a very short time."

The plan of operations against Holkar with which General Wellesley furnished Colonel Murray is a long one and there is no necessity of making any extracts from it here.

General Wellesley was at that time in Bombay; he marched out of Bombay with the intention of besieging Chandor. But he met with so many difficulties in his march, that he postponed the idea of besieging Chandor till the commencement of the rains. In the meanwhile, he received orders from the Governor-General to immediately proceed to Calcutta. The Court of Directors in England had severely criticised the Marquess Wellesley's wars and treaties of subsidiary alliance with Indian Princes. It was necessary to answer these despatches and also to arrange for the government of the territories ceded to the English in consequence of the operations of the Treaties of subsidiary alliance. General Wellesley's presence in Calcutta was required for answering the Court of Directors' despatches and suggest the settlement of certain political and military questions which had taxed the ingenuity of the Governor-General and his Council.

Accordingly General Wellesley left the Deccan, handing over the command of the troops to Colonel Wallace. From this time forward, General Wellesley altogether disappeared from the scene of battlefields in India. He had no more occasion to wield the sword against any other Indian prince. The few months that he spent in India were spent in either writing memorandums on the pressing political and diplomatic questions of the day or administering the State of Mysore as Governor of Seringapatam. Thus passed away from the military history of India General Wellesley, to whom should be given the credit of breaking the back of the Marathas by base intrigues, low cunning and foul conspiracies.

To parade his disinterestedness in the war against Holkar, the Governor-General had given out that it was

"not his intention, in the event of the reduction of Holkar's power, to take any share of the possessions of the Holkar family for the Company. Chandore and its dependencies and vicinity, will probably be given to the Peishwa; and the other possessions of Holkar, situated to the south of the Godavery, to the Subadar of the Deccan; all the remainder of the possessions of Holkar will accrue to Scindhia, provided he shall exert himself in the reduction of Jeswunt Rao Halkar."*

That portion of the map of India which now represents Holkar's dominion would have been by this time colored red, had the English succeeded in annihilating the power of Jaswunt Rao Holkar in 1804.

The dishonesty of the Governor-General regarding his intention of dividing Holkar's possessions amongst the Powers of the Deccan has been very ably exposed by James Mill.†

* *Mill*, Vol. VI. p. 400.

† Vol. VI. pp. 399-401.

"In his despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated 15th of June, 1804, the Governor-General says : 'Jeswunt Rao Holkar being justly considered as an adventurer, and as the *usurper* of the *rights* of his brother Cashee Rao Holkar—consistently with the principles of justice, no arrangement could be proposed between the British Government and Jeswunt Rao Halkar, involving the formal sanction of the British Government to that chieftain's *usurpation*, and to the exclusion of Cashee Rao Holkar from *his hereditary dominions.*' Yet these very dominions, thus declared to belong to Cashee Rao, the Governor-General had already resolved, without a shadow of complaint against Cashee Rao, to take, and give away to other persons . . . , In lieu of 'his hereditary dominions,' which it was not pretended that he had done anything to forfeit to the British Government, 'it will be necessary,' says the Governor-General in a subsequent paragraph, 'to make *some* provision for Cashee Rao, and for such of the legitimate branches of the family as may not be concerned in the violation of the public peace, or in the crimes of Jeswunt Rao Holkar.' "

"The motive which led the Governor-General to decline a portionof the territory of Holkar for the Company, immediately after having taken for it so great a portion from Scindhia ; and to add so largely to the dominions of Scindhia, immediately after having so greatly reduced them, is somewhat mysterious, if viewed through the single medium of national good ; but is sufficiently intelligible, if we either suppose, that he already condemned the policy of his former measures, and thought an opposite conduct very likely to pass without observation ; or, that, still approving the former policy, he yet regarded escape from the imputation of making war from the love of conquest, as a greater good, in the present instance, than the territories declined."

Of course, it was pure and simple hypocrisy on the part of the Governor-General to show this disinterestedness, which seems to us more apparent than real. The Marquess Wellesley would have certainly exacted some compensations from the Peshwa, the Nizam and Sindhia for allowing them to have a division of Holkar's possessions. It will be remembered that the Nizam had been granted a portion of the territories conquered from Tipu in 1790. We have already stated how the English subsequently absorbed this territory by imposing on the Nizam the Supplementary Treaty of Subsidiary Alliance. So the grant of a portion of Tipu's dominion to the Nizam was nominal and not real.

That duplicity, hypocrisy, intrigue, fraud and lying were the weapons offensive and defensive with this Governor-General has been adverted to over and over again. So his show of disinterestedness was merely a bait to make Sindhia and others assist the English in crushing Holkar and then not to award them any of Holkar's possessions on some ground of alleged misconduct. Before the war with Tipu had broken out, the Governor-General had promised the Peshwa a share in the territory conquered from Tipu. But the readers need not be reminded how the Peshwa had been deceived by the Marquess Wellesley.

The Governor-General was at this moment particularly anxious to appease Sindhia. He knew that he had wronged and injured the latter in many ways. His last act regarding Gwalior was a flagrant piece of injustice. In vain General Wellesley and Malcolm beseeched the Governor-General to restore Gwalior to Sindhia. To Malcolm, the Marquess Wellesley wrote on the 10th April, 1804 :—

"It may be hoped, that appearance of so many causes of discontent, concurring to disturb the temper of Scindhia's councils, may alarm me for the stability of the peace, and may terrify me into the cession of Gwalior and Gohad, and into a general system of concession and submission. conformably to Major Malcolm's principles. In this expectation, Scindhia's advisers and friends will

be disappointed, they will not move me as easily as they have shaken Major Malcolm. I am perfectly ready to renew the war to-morrow, if I find that the peace is not secure."

He was no doubt perfectly ready to renew the war, because he knew very well that Sindhia was surrounded with traitors in his camp. General Wellesley writing to Major Shawe (Private Secretary to the Governor-General), on the 26th February, 1804, said :

"I have no apprehension of any future foreign wars. Indeed no foreign powers now remain; even if Sindhia should not come into the defensive alliance, *we have got such a hold in his Durbar, by the treaty of peace, that if ever he goes to war with the Company, one half of his chiefs and of his army will be on our side*."

The words puts in italics in the above passage distinctly show how Sindhia's ministers had been bribed and corrupted by the English. One of the objects for which the Marquess Wellesley had declared the wars against Tipu and the Maratha confederates was to oblige them to part with the services of European military adventurers. But his brother, General Wellesley, was of another opinion. He thought it would be better for the Maratha princes to engage the services of these European adventurers to train their artillery and infantry. On the 18th November, 1803. he wrote to Major Shawe :

"It appears, however, that the Governor-General is desirous that they should not have any Europeans at all. This prohibition will go to their having no infantry or artillery, and this is a point which I think deserves consideration. . . . . . .

"I have no doubt whatever but that the military spirit of the nation has been destroyed by their establishment of infantry aud artillery, . . . ; at all events it is certain that those establishments, however formidable, afford us a good object of attack in a war with the Marathas and that the destruction of them contributes to the success of the contest . . . . .

". . . . If there were no infantry in a Maratha army, their cavalry would commence those predatory operations for which they were formerly so famous ; . . . .

"On this ground, therefore, I think that they should be encouraged to have infantry rather than otherwise. As, however, the Governor-General has given a positive opinion upon this subject, I shall make a demand in conformity to his wishes but this shall be the last of my demands, in hopes that I may hear further from you on the subject, before the peace should be concluded."

It would seem that the Governor-General agreed with the view of General Wellesley and did not raise any objection to Sindhia's entertaining the services of European military adventurers. Amongst these men, the members of the Filose family occupied many responsible military posts under Sindhia. The well-known Jean Baptiste Filose was at this time the actual, if not the nominal Commander-in-Chief of Sindhia's army. But it is a significant fact that he never rendered any assistance to Sindhia in his war with the English. There are good grounds to suspect, that this adventurer was in the pay of the English. Dowlat Rao Sindhia suspecting his loyalty and fidelity once placed him under arrest, but it is a pity that he did not follow the example of Jaswunt Rao Holkar in executing this faithless foreign adventurer.

Knowing the large number of traitors by whom he was surrounded, Sindhia had no mind to go again to war with the English. He had to submit to the Governor-General's arbitrary act of injustice and spoliation regarding Gwalior. In the postscript to their

despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated 15th June, 1804, the Governor-General and his councillors wrote:

"The Governor-General in Council has the satisfaction to apprize your honorable Committee, that . . . Dowlut Rao Scindhia (has) formally renounced all claim to the district of Gohud and to the fortress of Gwalior, ..."

It was convenient for the Governor-General to connive at the fact that Sindhia had been unjustly made to 'formally renounce all claim to the district of Gohud and to the fortress of Gwalior.'

Having inflicted this wound on Sindhia, the Governor-General tried to apply the balsam, by holding out the promise of making over the possessions of Holkar provided he would help the English in their unjust war on that Maratha prince. *Nolens volens,* Sindhia had to carry out the order of the Marquess Wellesley. For this purpose, he detached Bapu Sindhia and Jean Baptiste Filose to carry fire and sword into Holkar's dominion. Filose took Ashta, Sehore, Bhilsa and other places in Malwa which had formerly belonged to Holkar.

But so far Lake was not able to gain any advantage over Holkar. He had depended on General Wellesley'e marching from the Deccan and crushing Holkar. But when Lake discovered that General Wellesley was unable to do so, he seems to have lost heart. Dating his letter to General Stuart, Bombay, 17th March, 1804, General Wellesley wrote:

"In case of the war with Holkar, the Deccan would not be the scene of the operations. The contest would be on the frontiers of Hindustan and Guzerat; and, excepting to lay siege to Chandore, there would be nothing to do in the Deccan. . . .

"It will not answer to march the troops from the Deccan into Hindustan. If the troops go north of Chandore, fifty Holkars will start up in all parts of the territories of the Peishwa and of the Soubah of the Deccan; and it would be a most difficult operation to get through the hills between the Nerbudda and the Taptee. . ."

Again writing to Malcolm on the 20th April, 1304, General Wellesley wrote:

"Your letters of the 13th and 14th contain much important intelligence. The most important of any is that General Lake cannot quiet Hindustan, to the southward, to defeat Holkar.

"The troops to the southward shall do everything that is possible. But the General forgets the nature of our tenure, and our present State in the Deccan; the distance we are from Holkar; and the difficulty, amounting almost to an impossibility, of subsisting an army to the north of Poona, owing to famine. I can certainly take Chandore, at least I think so; and I will do everything else that I can. But I cannot venture to move the troops from the Deccan; . . . . .

"Supposing that matters remain as they are, it is my opinion that General Lake ought to move upon Holkar with all celerity, leaving in Hindustan a large proportion of his infantry, with some of his cavalry, . . . Having thus provided for the security of Hindustan, he should follow Holkar, and push him as hard as he can. . . .

"But if General Lake be tied down in Hindustan, it stands to reason that we have no means of pushing Holkar, or of bringing the war to a close, unless I should be able to get to the north, of which, at present, I do not see the smallest prospect. Indeed, unless General Lake follows Holkar our situation will be very unpleasant . . ."

But, as has been so often said before, Lake was not an able tactician. When he knew that he could not depend on General Wellesley for assisting him in the war, he

was much dispirited. In his letter to the Marquess Wellesley, marked 'Private' and dated May 12 1804, he wrote :

"It appears by the letter which will be forwarded to your Excellency by this Dawk, that General Wellesley thinks it will be impossible for the army from Poona to act until the rains, or that the army from Guzerat can do much till then. I understand, during the rainy season in the quarter the army would have to act, that it is almost impossible to move. In fact, an army in this counry cannot act in the rainy reason. Your Lordship will perhaps stare at reading this after what passed in last rainy season, but it must be recollected that such a season has not been known for years, as we had not seven days' rain, I believe, from the time we left Cawnpore until the surrender of Agra. The natives, who are extremely superstitious, say that God Almighty ordered the dry season for the purpose of our conquering Hindostan, and hold that language to this moment, saying that nothing can stand against the British, as God fights for them. I do most sincerely agree with them, as our successes have been beyond all parallel, and must have had the assistance of an invisible hand..,

"If it was possible for the Guzerat army to do anything before the rains set in, great advantage might be derived from it, . . . Should that army advance, and be stopped by the rains, the consequence would be most 'unpleasant.' I therefore fear we must desist from any active operations during that season."

Lake's victories over Sindhia's forces in Hindustan during the year 1803, were to a very large extent brought about by his successful intrigues with Sindhia's treacherous foreign officers. Unfortunately for Lake, Holkar had got rid of all his foreign officers. So there was no chance for him to intrigue with Holkar's men. However, it should not be supposed that the English desisted from opening a campaign of intrigues and conspiracies against Holkar. Amir Khan was still, to all outward appearances, a partisan of Holkar. It was with him that they intrigued. Of course, the English had been trying since a long time past to detach Amir Khan from Holkar. The manner in which the Nizam was advised by them to engage the services of Amir Khan has been already referred to. Although, Amir Khan then did not join the Nizam, it is not improbable that he was all the time in the pay of the English. At least the latter never ceased intriguing with him. Before they had formally gone to war with Holkar, they had left no stone unturned to corrupt Amir Khan. Dating his letter from Puna, 2nd March, 1804, General Wellesley wrote to Malcolm :

"Mercer is in treaty with Meer Khan and if he should draw him off from Holkar, there is an end of the latter."

The English succeeded in converting Amir Khan into a traitor in Holkar's camp, for although Amir Khan never left outwardly the service of Holkar, yet he was in the pay or at all events in the interest of the English. It is not improbable that the disasters which befell Holkar, were in no small measure due to the treachery of Amir Khan.

Although the Commander-in-Chief succeeded in inducing the Governor-General to declare war on Holkar, yet, when he discovered the difficulties which stared him in the face, his heart failed him. His letter, dated the 12th May, 1804, to the Governor-General, extracts from which have already been given above seems to have made the Marquees Wellesley change his decision regarding the war with Holkar. On the 25th May, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote a 'most secret and confidential' letter to Lake. He wrote :

"I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency a copy of notes intended to form the basis of instructions which will speedily be forwarded to your Excellency, to Major-General Wellesley, and to the Governments of Fort St. George and Bombay. The notes will apprize your Excellency of of my views with regard to the general distribution of the British troops throughout India in the actual state of affairs. . . . . . .

"The great advantage to be derived by relieving the finances of India from the burthen of maintaining the subsisting military establishment in the field will induce your Excellency to effect every possible reduction of expense which may be compatible with the security of our dominions in Hindustan.

"It is not my intention, under any circumstances of the present moment, to authorize any augmentation to the military establishments under any of the Presidencies."

It was pecuniary consideration combined with the difficulties of the campaign against Holkar pointed out by Lake in his letter of the 12th May, 1804, which decided the Governor-General to abandon the war on that Maratha chief. His 'Notes of instructions' commenced as follows :

"Holkar's force having been compelled to retire from the North-Western frontier of Hindustan, and no prospect appearing of danger to our possessions in that quarter during the approaching season, no reason appears to require the continuance of the Commander-in-Chief's army in the field, for the mere purpose of security to our territories.

"It appears that war against Holkar cannot be prosecuted with advantage at present by the army under the Commander-in-Chief.

"It appears that at present war against Holkar cannot be prosecuted with advantage either by the forces under the immediate command of Major-General Wellesley, or by the subsidiary force at Hyderabad, and that the forces from Guzerat cannot advance with safety to the internal tranquility of that country, or without hazard of suffering in their progress towards Holkar's possessions by the general distress of the country.

"It appears that Holkar's army and resources diminish daily, and that his reputation has suffered from his precipitate flight. . . . . .

"In any of these cases it is unnecessary and unadvisable that any part of the British army should attempt, in the present season, to advance further towards the central or southern parts of Hindustan. . . . . .

"With these views orders will be transmitted to the Commander-in-Chief, to Major-General Wellesley, and to the Governments of Fort St. George and Bombay respectively, to the following effect :

Here follow instructions to withdraw the armies from the field.*

* Wellesley's Despatches, iv. 68-71.

But before the issue of these instructions by the Governor-General. the Commander-in-Chief had thrown away a golden opportunity to amicably settle matters with Holkar. On the 8th of May, Lake received a letter from Holkar in which the latter offered to send a duly authorized person "to settle everything amicably." But the Commander-in-Chief was then thirsty of blood. He did not lend an ear to Holkar's proposal. He replied:

"When I wrote you, formerly, that Vakeels might be sent to confirm a friendship, conditions were specified, which you have not any way fulfilled ; but have acted directly contrary to them. This has forced the British Government to concert, with its allies, the necessary measure for subverting a power, equally inimical to all. This has been resolved upon. You will percieve that I cannot now enter into any bonds of amity with you, without consulting the allies of the British Government."

Had the Commander-in-Chief then tried to come to terms with Holkar, the English would have been spared the humiliation and disasters which Holkar inflicted on them. When the Governor-General ordered the withdrawal of the armies from the field, it was found impossible to do so. Events had taken place which seriously compromised the prestige of the English in India.

On the 28th May, 1804, Lake wrote a 'private' letter to the Governor-General an extract from which only is published in the Despatches of the Marquees Wellesley. In this letter, he expressed his opinion regarding the disaster which had befallen the English in Bundelkhand. Colonel Fawcett was commanding Bundelkhand. On the 22nd May, 1804, he wrote to the Adjutant-General a letter in which he described his very critical situation in Bundelkhand. From his letter, it would seem, that although Amir Khan was in treaty with the English he did not cease plundering provinces which then owed allegiance to them.* From camp at Kuch, on 22nd May, Col. Fawcett wrote to the Adjutant-General :

"At two o'clock this morning, Hurcarrahs came in with intelligence of the enemy being on their march towards this camp in great force, commanded by Meer (Amir) Khan in person; as the Hucrarrahs reported the enemy to be within three miles of camp, the whole troops were immediately got under arms ; . . .

"As it occurred to me that Captain Smith's Detachment was opposed to some risk, if the enemy went against it, I despatched a mounted trooper about half-past two o'clock in the morning, to order Captain Smith to return with his detachment to this Camp immediately. . . . . Captain Smith reports, that just as he had despatched his note in the morning, the village in which the attack against the fort was preparing was surrounded suddenly with immense bodies of horse; firing was heard in the village, which, after a short time entirely ceased; and by a man who escaped from the village, and came to Captain Smith's Camp, which was distant from the village about half a mile, he learned that the detachment in the village, consisting of two companies of Sepoys, fifty European artillery, fifty gun lascars, with two 12-pounders, two howitzers, one 6-pounder, and twelve tumbrils, were entirely taken by the enemy, and the men and officers all cut to pieces. ... This is a most severe loss, and much as I lament it, both in a public and private point of view, I fear the ill consequences arising from the accident will prove very serious."†

The humiliation and disgrace which this disaster inflcted on the English were to

* This surmise of Colonel Fawcett was not correct. Amir Khan was now in the pay of the English and consequently he could not have attacked them. That such was the fact, even the Governor-General and his councillors admitted. The 93rd paragraph of the despatch dated 15th June, 1804, forwarded to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors by the Governor-General in Council, runs as follows:

"The party of predatory horse was originally stated to be fifteen or twenty thousand in number. and to be commanded by *Ameer Khan, formerly a partizan of Jeswunt Rao Holkar.* From information, however, subsequently received, there is every reason to believe that this party of predatory horse did not exceed five thousand, that they did not belong to Ameer Khan, and that the predatory incursion had no connection with the movements of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, but was a mere incursion of vagrant banditti for the purpose of obtaining subsistence by plunder."

The words put in italics in the above passage clearly show how Amir Khan was hunting with the hound and running with the hare. He was a traitor in the camp of Holkar.

† Wellesley's Despatches, IV. 72-73.

be wiped out at any cost. Lake in his letter of the 28th May, 1804, wrote to the Governor-General :

"This unfortunate business in Bundelkhand is very distressing ; ......

"By Colonel Powell's illness, and the death of Colonel Polhill, the command of the detachment in Bundelkhand devolved to Colonel Fawcett, events not to have been foreseen ; and had it devolved to any other man in the army, this dreadful event could not have happened I do really think. With four battalions of sepoys and 450 Europeans, to have suffered these guns to have been carried away does seem most extraordinary. ...... I have ordered Colonel Fawcett to resign his command to Lieut.-Colonel Wittit. ...

"I really thought I had left a most ample force for the protection of Bundelkhand against any number of irregular horse whatever. ...."

In reply to this letter, the Governor-General wrote to Lake on the 8th June, 1804 :

"It was impossible to anticipate the flagrant misconduct by which the honor of the British arms has been disgraced, and the interests of the British Government hazarded, by an officer, furnished with such ample means of maintaining both.

"It is difficult to calculate the extent of the evil consequences which may result from this unparalleled accident. ....

"In consequence of the state of affairs in Bundelkhand, it appears to be necessary to apprize your Excellency of my opinion that the arrangements stated in my instructions of the 25th May, 1804, must be postponed, and every possible efforts and exertion must be made to reduce Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and the predatory chiefs connected with him, ..."

At the same time, he authorized Lake "to place Lieut.-Colonel Fawcett in arrest, and to bring him to immediate trial before a general court-martial."

On the 30th May, 1804, the Governor-General wrote to his brother, General Wellesley :

"Since the date of my letter of the 16th of April, I have received, through the Commander-in-Chief, and from you, the despatches ... on the subject of eventual operations against Jeswunt Rao Holkar.

"In consequence of the intelligenee contained in your despatches, and those of the Commander-in-Chief, I have issued the notes of instructions, which were forwarded to you under date the 25th of May. You will be pleased to consider the instructions contained in these notes to supersede those contained in my despatch of the 16th of April, 1804.

"The instructions ...... of my letters of the 16th of April, 1804, are become unnecessary in the present moment. ......

"Under these circumstances, my expectation is that you may be enabled immediately after having issued your orders for the execution of the plan contained in my instructions of the 25th of May, 1804, to proceed to Fort William · · · for the purpose of communicating with me and with the Commander-in-Chief upon the various and important political and military questions now depending in India, and bearing an intimate relation to your political commission and military command."

General Wellesley was only too glad to leave the Deccan, where his position had been compromised by the Governor-General not keeping faith with Sindhia and the Raja of Berar regarding the interpretation of certain articles of the treaties which had been negotiated by him. As said before, he handed over the command of the troops in the Deccan to Colonel Wallace, and proceeded to Calcutta. But he was unable to carry out the instructions of the Governor-General as regards the withdrawal of the troops from the field, or prohibit Colonel Murray from advancing on to Malwa. On

the receipt of the Governor-General's instructions of the 25th May, 1804, General Wellesley addressed a letter to Major Shawe, Private Secretary to the Marquess Wellesley. The letter is dated from Camp at Chinchor, 20th June, 1804. He wrote:

"I am carrying into execution, in some degree, the instruction of the 25th May, reducing as far as possible the expense without diminishing the efficiency of the troops; . . .

"Colonel Murray is, I hope, already in Malwa, and I have not recalled him, for reasons which I think will be thought sufficient. . . . .

"I hope to be able to quit the army on the day after to-morrow. . . . "

So a few days after penning the letter from which extracts are given above, General Wellesley left the Deccan for good. But his decision not to recall Colonel Murray was a wise one, for, as stated before, the Governor-General had issued orders suspending his instructions of the 25th May, 1804. Writing to Lake on the 24th June, 1804, General Wellesley said:

"I have not recalled Colonel Murray from Malwa; on the contrary, I have urged Mr. Duncan, under whose orders he falls, to allow him to continue his operations in Malwa according to my instructions of the 7th May. . . .

"I am of opinion that no inconvenience will result from these arrangements; on the contrary, the troops will be relieved from great distress and inconvenience; . . . "

So war was now undertaken in right earnest against Holkar. There were three principal armies with several detachments in the field to operate against Holkar and reduce his power. The main army was in Hindustan under Lake. The army in the Deccan was under Colonel Wallace; and that in Guzerat under Colonel Murray. Besides these armies, fraud and intrigues were reducing Holkar's power.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR WITH HOLKAR AND HUMILIATION OF THE BRITISH.

The war with the Maratha confederates was merely a child's play compared with that with Holkar. Generals Lake and Wellesley seemed to have swept everything before them when they levied war on Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. The capture of Ahmadnagar or that of Coel was accomplished without any bloodshed. It has been over and over again repeated that the ease with which Lake and Wellesley deprived Sindhia of his fortresses and territories was, in no small measure, due to the fact of the foreign servants in the employ of Sindhia having turned traitors and betrayed their master. The difficulty which the Commander-in-Chief experienced in getting the better of Holkar was that he could not intrigue with any of the dependants and servants of the latter, since very wisely Holkar had got rid of all his foreign servants, who possessed such fine sense of gratitude and honour as not to have scrupled to betray their master whose salt they had eaten.

But it should not be understood that the English ceased intriguing and conspiring against Holkar. Lake was a past master in the nefarious art of intrigues. He opened the campaign of intrigue against Holkar. Amir Khan had been bought over, and as to that perfidious Afghan soldier of fortune, gold symbolized the most perfect bliss on this earth, so he did not scruple to hunt with the hound and run with the hare.

The British had not anticipated that the war with Holkar would assume such serious proportions as subsequent events proved. They were at their wit's end to bring the war to a successful termination. But how they were disappointed in this, we shall have occasion to show.

Before the Governor-General had issued his note of instructions of the 25th May, 1804, for the withdrawal of troops from the field, General Lake had sent a detachment under the command of Colonel Don to take possession of the fort of Tonk-Rampoora. Colonel Don did not experience much difficulty in executing the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. On the 16th May, 1804, the fort of Rampoora was very easily taken by him.

But the subsequent operation of the troops under the command of British officers hardly brought any credit to them. Disasters after disasters overtook them and the English seem to have sincerely wished that they had not commenced hostilities against Holkar. After the disgraceful conduct of Lieut.-Colonel Fawcett which led the Governor-General to change his mind regarding the prosecution of the war with Holkar, Lake tried his best to retrieve the disaster. Brigadier-General Monson, in whose ability and skill he reposed fullest confidence, was detached to pursure Holkar. With this object in view, the general was given a large army and every facility to

carry out to a successful termination the project of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief.

Dating his letter from Fort William, July 9th, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley assured Lord Castlereagh,

"that every appearanee promises durable peace in India. The necessity of repelling Holkar's banditti from the frontier of Hindustan, and of reducing him to a peaceful conduct will not lead to any serious interruption of peace, *and will probably tend to consolidate our connection with Scindhia.* The Commander-in-Chief, with the greater part of the main army in Hindustan, is returned to the cantonment of Cawnpore, and my attention is now directed to the desirable object of withdrawing the whole army from the field, and of reducing the military charges."

But the Governor-General was disappointed in all his hopes. The war with Holkar did not tend to consolidate the connection of the English with Sinddia as, from the words put in italics in the above extract, the Marques Wellesley had expected. There was no immediate prospect of reducing the military charges, and moreover the Commander-in-Chief was not allowed to remain long in the cantonment of Cawnpur.

Colonel Monson, as said before, was detached to pursue Holkar. But that officer's heart quailed at the sight of the large force which Holkar had mustered. He reported this circumstance to the Commander-in-Chief as well as the Governor-General. The latter on the receipt of this despatch from Colonel Monson forwarded to Lake "Notes of Instructions" on the 28th July, 1804. The Governor-General labelled these "Notes" as "most secret and confidental." He wrote :

"it appears by the last despatches from the Commander-in-Chief, and from Lieut-Colonel Monson, that Jeswunt Rao Holkar has collected a very considerable force near the Mucundra Pass, and now commands in that position an army stated to consist of a large body of cavalry, a corps of regular infantry, and a large train of artillery. It is not probable that he will again separate this force, if he really possesses the means of keeping it together, . . .

"This state of circumstances presents a favourable opportunity for striking a decisive blow against Holkar's power and resources. No expectation can be entertained of any accommodation with Holkar as long as he shall remain in any degree of force. . . . It does not appear that either of the corps under the command of Colonel Murray, and of Lieut.-Colonel Monson, are sufficiently strong to encounter singly Holkar's force in the field. It is also evident that as long as Holkar shall be enabled to maintain a superiority in the field, it will be impossible for the detachments under Colonel Murray and Lieut-Colonel Monson, to effect a junction of their forces, and a protracted and expensive war may be expected to be the consequence of this system of operations.

"Under these circumstances it appears to be highly expedient to adopt immediate measures for the attack of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. The first step with a view to this desirable object is to reinforce either of the detachments under Colonel Murray or Lieut.-Colonel Monson, . . .

"From the distance of Colonel Murray's detachment from the troops in the Deccan, it will be impossible to reinforce him from that quarter; . . . It appears, therefore, to be necessary to reinforce the detachments under Lieut.-Colonel Monson.

The Marquess Wellesley had hardly finished these notes of instructions, when he received the intelligence of the disaster that had overtaken Colonel Monson. The last paragraph of these "Notes" runs as follows:

"By letter just received (half past 4 o'clock, p. m.) from Lieut.-Colonel Lake to Captain Armstrong, dated 20th July, it appears that Colonel Monson's detachment was retreating before Holkar, and had quitted the Mucundra P---

"This is a most painful state of affairs. Nothing can retrieve our character but the most vigorous effort. I fear that all our exertions will now be too late to recover all we have lost."

The Governor-General desired that the Commander-in-Chief should take the field in person, for he wrote:

"The despatches received to-day seem to leave no hope of success unless the Commander-in-Chief can again take the field in person, and attack Holkar with vigour; in that case, all my apprehensions would be converted into a certainty of success."

It is necessary to describe in detail the nature of Colonel Monson's disaster. It has already been stated before that the Commander-in-Chief had detached Monson to keep Holkar in check. The plan of the campaign was that Colonel Murray was to advance from Guzerat and Monson to proceed into Holkar's territory from the North. These two British officers, namely, Colonels Murray and Monson, were ultimately to unite their forces and conjointly operate against Holkar. Monson was junior to Colonel Murray in rank. Had the junction of the two forces taken place the supreme command would have devolved on Colonel Murray. But this was an event which neither the Governor-General nor his unflinching supporter, the 'ruffian' Commander-in-Chief, desired. Monson had after all 'blue blood' in his veins; he belonged to the aristocracy, being the younger son of some British peer. In his 'most secrect and confidental' notes of instructions for Lake dated 28th July, 1804, the Governor-General wrote:

"The Commander-in-Chief will also determine whether it may be necessary to send an officer of superior rank to take the command of the detachment to be employed against Holkar, . . . This suggestion is entirely compatible with the greatest respect for the character and services of Lieut.-Colonel Monson, in whose approved zeal, courage, and skill, the Governor-General reposes the utmost confidence. In the prosecution, however, of active operations against Jeswunt Rao Holkar, the two detachments under Colonel Murray and Lieut.-Colonel Monson may effect a junction, and the chief command will then devolve upon Colonel Murray; and the Commander-in-Chief may probably consider the command of the united detachments to be too extensive for an officer of the rank of Colonel Murray."

The Commander-in-Chief had also foreseen the possibility of such a contingency and hence with the object that the chief command should not devolve upon Colonel Murray, he had nominated Lieut.-Colonel Monson, although junior to Colonel Murray, to the temporary rank of Brigadier-General. It was a flagrant act of nepotism.

General Monson entered Holkar's territory by the Mokundra pass on the first of July. On the evening of the second of July, a detachment from his force captured the fort of Hinglais-Gurh by escalade. The force with which Monson was furnished, consisted of five battalions of Sepoys, with artillery in proportion. and about 3,000 irregular horse—the latter divided into two bodies, the one commanded by the traitor named Lieutenant Lucan, and the other under the command of Bapuji Sindhia, in the service of Dowlat Rao Sindhia. Thus the force under Monson was quite ample to meet any emergencies. With this large force Monson continued his march towards the Chambal until the 7th July, and had advanced about fifty miles beyond the Mokundra pass. News was brought to him of Holkar's crossing the river. At first

he hoped that he would be able to attack Holkar's force with advantage before the latter had recovered from the confusion which the passage of the river would be sure to produce. He had further hoped to communicate with Colonel Murray, who was advancing from Guzerat towards Ujjain. But imagine his chagrin when he came to know that Colonel Murray intended to fall back on Guzerat and that he had only two days' grain in his camp.

It appeared necessary to Monson to retreat from Holkar's territory and so he determined to retire to the Mokundra pass. While it is easy to understand this retreat of Monson, that of Colonel Murray can not be so satisfactorily explained. But we should think his supersession might have had something to do with his want of energy and vigor in pushing on to Holkar's territory from the side of Guzerat.

Horace Hayman Wilson, in a footnote to his edition of Mill's *History of India,** writes :

"Monson's determination to retreat is affirmed by Amir Khan to have been adopted by the treacherous advice of Bapoojee Scindhia, who was in secret understanding with Jeswunt Rao."

Much reliance can not and should not be placed on Amir Khan's affirmations and statements. Amir Khan's memoirs seem to have been inspired, if not actually dictated by the English, by whom he was granted the principality of Tonk as a reward for his treachery to Holkar. The memoirs were written after he had been granted the principality of Tonk. Hence no surprise need be felt that his statements should be such as would flatter the vanity of the English.

Even supposing that Monson determined to retreat on the advice of Bapuji Sindhia, it does not speak much for the courage and generalship of Monson to have acted on that advice without weighing the *pros* and *cons* of the step he was taking. That Monson was not much of a tactician is borne testimony to by even his most ardent patron, General Lake, who said regarding him that it was extraordinary "that a man, brave as a lion, should have no judgment or reflection." Whatever may be said by the English in explanation or extenuation of Monson's retreat, it appears to us that his retreat was due not a little to his cowardice and his sense of inability to meet Holkar in fair fight.

So Monson began his retreat by sending off the whole of the baggage and stores to Soonarah, at four in the morning of the 8th July. He himself remained on the encamping ground till half past nine, when no enemy having appeared, he commenced his march. He left the irregular horse on the ground with orders to follow in half an hour, and afford the earliest information of Holkar's motions. Monson had retired about twelve miles when intelligence was brought that the irregular cavalry had been attacked and defeated by Holkar, and that traitor, once in the employ of Dowlat Rao Scindhia, named Lieut. Lucan, had been taken prisoner. How far Bapuji Sindhia rendered assistance to Holkar in capturing Lieut. Lucan cannot be definitely stated. But when we remember the fact that the fall of the fort at Aligarh was due to the treachery of Lieut. Lucan, we should not consider Bapuji Sindhia loyal and

* VI. p. 405.

faithful to his master, if he were not to take advantage of the opportunity and to see the foreign traitor meet with his deserts. The fate of Lieut. Lucan was such as every traitor fully deserves. When Holkar attacked him, most of the horse he commanded deserted him and he was thus easily taken prisoner and died of a bowel complaint at Kota.

Monson seems to have been so much dispirited and cowed down that in stead of trying to retrieve the disaster and march to the relief of the irregular horse and fight Holkar, he precipitately fled to the Mokundra pass, which he reached about noon on the 9th July. But this rapid retreat of Monson did not save him from the pursuit of Holkar. On the morning of the 10th a large body of Holkar's cavalry appeared and continually increased in numbers till noon of the 11th. Holkar was in command of the cavalry in person. He summoned Monson to surrender. This demand was rejected. Then Holkar, dividing his cavalry into three bodies, attacked Monson's detachment in front and flanks, but could not make much impression on them for want of artillery and guns. Of course cavalry alone is not of much avail against well-disciplined artillery and infantry. So Holkar prudently withdrew his troops in the evening and encamped at the distance of four miles to be beyond the range of fire of the English. Here he was joined by his infantry and guns, and it was supposed that he would renew the attack on the following morning.

Monson, now thoroughly cowed down and being apprehensive of having his retreat cut off, determined on retiring to Kota, which place he reached in two marches on the 12th. But here, not meeting with that reception from the Raja of Kota which he had hoped, he left the place almost immediately and continued his march towards the Ganmuch ford on the Chambal. On account of the heavy downpour of rain, the ford was impassable, until the following day (*i.e.*, 13th). On the 14th, Monson was obliged to halt to enable the troops to procure some grain. The whole of the detachment under Monson did not reach Rampurah till the 29th July. Grant Duff has very graphically described the miseries to which the men under Monson were exposed since the commencement of the retreat. He writes:

"On the 15th (July) he (Monson) resumed his march, but the guns sank so deep in the mud that they could not be extricated. The grain in the adjoining village was exhausted, retreat was now necessary to procure subsistence: the ammunition was therefore destroyed, and the guns were spiked and abandoned; but they were recommended to the care of the Raja of Boondee, who, although he could not save the guns, had the courage to maintain his engagements with the English in the face of the host of Holkar. On the 17th the troops reached the Chumbelee rivulet, which was not fordable, but Monson, on the ensuing day, sent his artillery men across on elephants, with orders to proceed to the fort of Rampoorah. Nearly ten days elapsed before the whole of the troops—some on elephants, some on rafts, and some by being sent to a ford farther down could cross this rivulet, so greatly was it swollen. During that time they sustained much privation; in different situations, they repulsed several persevering attacks which were made upon them by Holkar's cavalry; and a detachment of flank Companies, under Captain O'Donell, beat up the camp of a large body of the enemy on the evening of the 21st July, with great spirit and success. Many of the men were drowned in crossing the Chumbelee: but the most trying to the poor sepoys of all that they endured, was the loss of many of their wives and children, who, being in some instances necessarily left on the opposite bank till the last, were, in this helpless and unprotected state, in view and within hearing of

their husbands, barbarously massacred by Bheels from the neighbouring hills who were in the interests of Holkar."*

Such was the spirit of gallantry shown by the European General in suffering the helpless wives and children belonging to the men of the detachment under his command to be massacred by the enemy. The conduct of the Bhils, of course, cannot be too strongly condemned. There was so much mismanagement and want of ordinary precautions that had Monson not been a protege of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, he would have been court-martialled and cashiered. It will be remembered how the Marquess Wellesley authorized Lake to bring Colonel Fawcett before a general court-martial. But the faults or even crimes of Colonel Fawcett dwindle into insignificance when compared with those of Monson.

It may be asked, why did not Holkar take advantage of the opportunity by pursuing and attacking the British. But it should be remembered that the incessant rain occasioned obstructions, and prevented him from cutting to pieces the troops under the command of the British officers. In his memorandum upon operations in the Maratha territory, General Wellesley had detailed his reasons for commencing a campaign against the Marathas during the rainy season.

Thus the rainy season prevented Holkar from pursuing the force under Monson. Every advantage, it will be seen, lay on the side of the British. Had Monson been a man of energy and skill, there was a golden opportunity for him to totally crush Holkar.

The news of Monson's retreat and the disastrous consequences attendant on it filled the mind of the Commander-in-Chief as well as of the Governor-General with alarm. The humiliation of the British in India was now quite unprecedented. Dating his letter, marked 'private', from Cawnpur, July 21st, 1804, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"It grieves me to have sent you any account which I know must vex and torment you, but I trust nothing serious can happen from the falling back of Monson's force. Holkar's cavalry is, I believe, most despicable, and his brigades, if my information is correct (which I think it is), are far from strong, the battalions, upon an average, not more than three hundred men; if complete, they amount only to four hundred and fifty each. Had Colonel Murray fortunately come on, Holkar would have been completely destroyed. . . . . The number of irregular horse is always exaggerated, ten or twelve thousand when dispersed in their sort of order appear a prodigious number. I think Holkar will not easily get his cavalry to attack our infantry again unless he brings his guns, which will retard him. and prevent his horse from doing much mischief. His guns will, in the end, be the cause of his ruin. His insolence is abominable. I think he cannot do us any immediate injury. . . . I lament most sincerely that our forbearance some months back prevented me from attacking, which, if we had done, he would to a certainty have been totally destroyed. . . . . Rest assured, my dear Lord, nothing shall be wanting on my part to prevent the glory of our late campaign being tarnished by any advantage that can be gained by this freebooter. He *certainly has not at present one man of power or consequence attached to him, and I think it will be in my power to prevent any one from joining him. . . .*"

As this letter of Lake sheds much sidelight on the war with Holkar, so the above extracts have been made from it. From this letter it is evident, that Holkar's force did

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* P. 500.

not much exceed that of Monson, that the number of irregular horse of the former was much exaggerated, and that it was nothing short of cowardice on the part of Monson to have precipitately retreated before such an insignificant and undisciplined force as that of Holkar. We can also understand why Holkar did not pursue Monson;—for the simple reason that his force was not large enough to have accomplished with success the pursuit. It is also evident from the letter of General Lake, extracts from which have been given above in italics, that he opened a campaign of intrigues against Holkar.

When the Governor-General became aware of Monson's retreat, he, as said before, desired the Commander-in-Chief to take the field in person. But before Lake moved out of Cawnpur, where he had been staying since June, 1804, he had the mortification to hear of the fresh disasters that had overtaken Monson, and the latter's retreat on to Agra.

As said before, all the troops under Monson reached Rampura on the 29th July. He did not move from this place till the 22nd August. There is no sufficient explanation for this long delay on the part of Monson at Rampura. He was joined here by two battalions of Sepoys, a body of irregular horse, four six-pounders, two howitzers, and a supply of grain, sent to his relief from Agra by Lake as soon as he received intelligence of Monson's retreat. On the 22nd August, he left Rampura and commenced his retreat towards Kushalgarh. His long delay at Rampura, not sufficiently explained anywhere, was, according to Lake, a fatal mistake. His determination to retreat on to Kushalgarh was based on his expectation to find sufficient supplies for his troops there, and also to be joined by six of Sindhia's battalions with 21 guns, under Sadashiva Bhow Bhaskar, the officer defeated by Holkar at Puna in October, 1802.

On the morning of the 22nd August, Monson reached the river Bannas. Here he was encamped on the banks of the river, which he was in hopes to be able to cross the following day. But the river was so much swollen as to be scarcely fordable for the largest elephants. There boats were found, in which he ordered Captain Nicholl with six Companies of a regiment to cross and proceed immediately to Kushalgarh, in charge of the treasure with his detachment. On the evening of the 23rd the whole of Holkar's cavalry came up, and pitched their camp about four miles from Monson; on the morning of the 24th at day light, finding the river fordable, Monson began to cross his baggage. At eight o'clock a.m., Holkar took possession of a large village on Monson's right. By twelve o'clock the whole of Monson's baggage with 4 battalions had crossed the river and had Monson been possessed of a little commonsense and proper ideas of military tactics, he would have allowed the remaining troops and himself to cross the river. Instead of doing that, he attempted an attack on Holkar. Although for a moment, the British seemed to have been victorious, yet Holkar in person charged with overpowering numbers, and the handful of sepoys under British officers was nearly annihilated. Holkar's irregular horse had also crossed the river and attacked Monson's baggage. Seeing no other course open and being thoroughly cowed down, Monson abandoned the baggage and such of his wounded and fatigued sepoys and followers as were unable to march with him, and precipitately retreated on to Kushalgarh, which place he reached on the night of the 25th August.

Kushalgarh was in the territory of the Raja of Jeypoor. Sindhia's detachment under Sadashiva Bhow Bhaskar was here and would have co-operated with Monson's, but Sindhia and his officers and men had become quite disgusted with the British and, instead of co-operating with them, they tried to harass and annoy them. Not finding Kushalgarh a safe asylum either for himself or his men, Monson moved out of the place on the evening of the 26th August and prosecuted his retreat towards Agra, which was reached by the 31st August.

It is not necessary to mention the skirmishes which Monson and his troops under him had with Holkar's men during the retreat from Kushalgarh. Fortunately for Monson, Holkar's men were not in sufficient force to reap the full advantage of the confusion and cowardice exhibited by Monson and the officers under him.

The position of the British at this moment in India was most critical. They had undertaken the war trusting that Sindhia would render them material assistance in their operations against Holkar. But Sindhia or at least his officers and men detached for co-operation with the British threw off all disguise and openly joined Holkar. There was so much disaffection in the country then under the rule of the British that Holkar received much help from many men of consequence in his expedition in Hindustan. Monson's troops had been so much disaffected and disspiritcd that they deserted him and joined Holkar. The loss sustained by the British on account of the cowardice and want of proper management of affairs by Monson was very heavy. Dating his letter marked 'private' from Cawnpur, Sept. 2nd, 1804, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"I will not at present say anything more upon this disgraceful and disastrous event, as my feelings are for many reasons too much agitated to enter into the misfortunes and causes of it. A finer detachment never marched, and sorry I am to say, that if this account of Lieutenant Anderson is correct, I have lost five battalions and six companies, the flower of the army, and how they are to be replaced at this day, God only knows. I have to lament also the loss of some of the finest young men and most promising in the army.

Referring to the desertion of the Sepoys, Lake wrote on the 8th Sept., 1804, to the Marquess Wellesley:

"I shall cause every possible enquiry to be made into the apparent disaffection, on the part of some of the corps, who formed the detachment, but I have the pleasure to assure your Lordship that it does not appear to have been by any means extensive."

But it does not appear that any enquiry, if made, was over published. Grant Duff (p, 591), writes:

"Of the cause of this partial disaffection there is no account afforded, * * * Unnfortunately, Brigadier-General Monson did not know the sepoys; they had no confidence in him, nor he in them."

It seems that no enquiry was ever made into the cause of the disaffection; nor any enquiry made to account for Monson's retreat. In his despatch to the Secret Commitee of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, dated 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council wrote:

"The Governor-General in Council is also unable at this time distinctly to explain the causes of the retreat of Lieut.-Colonel Monson's detachment under circumstances of difficulty and distress.

Those causes must be sought in the conduct and operations of the several detachments actively employed against the forces of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, which the Governor-General in Council is not yet enabled to state with accuracy and precision : the distance of the scene of action, and the necessity of accelerating the operations of the main body of the army, having precluded the possibility of completing any satisfactory investigation of the movements of those detachments. Every effort, however, will be employed to submit to your honourable Committee with the least practicable delay. all the details connected with such transactions as may now appear to be imperfectly related."

But from the published records so far it does not appear that the Secret Committee were ever furnished with the causes of Monson's retreat. It was the interest of the Marquess Wellesley and General Lake to screen Monson. On the 11th September, 1804, the Governor-General wrote to Lake:

"...from the first hour of Colonel Monson's retreat, I have always augured the ruin of that detachment, and if any part of it be saved, I deem it so much gain. From Colonel Blair's letter to Colonel Macan, I trust that the greater part of the detachment is arrived at Agra, but I fear my poor friend Monson is gone. Whatever may have been his fate, or whatever the result of his misfortunes to my own fame, I will endeavour to shield his character from obloquy, nor will I attempt the mean purpose of sacrificing his reputation to save mine. His former services and his zeal entitle him to indulgence ; and *however I may lament or suffer for his errors, I will not reproach his memory if he be lost, or his character, if he survive.*"

The words put in italics in the above extract show the sentiment which the Marquess Wellesley entertained towards Monson. It could have been hardly expected of him to have taken Monson to task for the latter's misconduct in connection with the retreat. It was pure and simple hypocrisy, therefore, on his part to have promised the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors that he would institute enquiries regarding the causes of Monson's retreat.

In replying to the Governor-General's letter, extracts from which have been given above, General Lake wrote a letter marked 'Private' and dated Agra, Sept, 22nd, 1804. He commenced his letter as follows:

"Your letter of the 11th instant reached me at this place this morning, and is most truly gratifying to my feelings. Your sentiments respecting Monson are noble, and like yourself, and are worthy of the great mind you possess. He is fortunately alive to answer for himself, it is a subject I do not wish to enter upon. I, like yourself, foresaw what would probably happen, and was in hopes I had taken precautions to prevent any further ill effects after his getting to Rampoorah, but alas ! it was not to be. His remaining at that place was fatal."

Again in his 'private' letter, dated Secundra, Sept, 24th, 1804, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :

"Be assured I will do everything in my power to recover the late unfortunate disaster, and sincerely hope success will attend us ; indeed, I have no doubt of it. ...Although you so nobly declare your determinat'on to shield the character of Colonel Monson from obloquy, whatever may be the result of his misfortunes, to your own fame—here, my dear Lord, I must remark that whatever may be said upon the subject, you surely cannot be implicated in the business, as all blame ought to fall upon me for detaching the force in the first instance, when I thought I had selected corps with a man to command them who would have accomplished all my wishes, and obtained the end proposed. This being the case, I certainly become the responsible person in the first instance, and shall, upon every occasion, declare publicy and privately, both here and at home, that you had nothing to do with the march of that detachment, and that all censure for that

measure must be attributed to me, and me alone, ... I stand perfectly at ease on that score, unless it may be said that I left too much to the discretion of Colonel Monson. All I wish to be understood is, that no blame in sending out that force can fall to your share but to myself who sent it. It has caused me many an uneasy moment,..."

Under these circumstances, all attempts were directed to frustrate any impartial enquiry being made into the causes of the retreat.

The effects of the retreat were disastious to the British, whose humiliation was, as said before, quite unprecedented.

British prestige in India had indeed fallen to a very low ebb, and it is necessary to go back to the First Maratha War to find a parallel to the heavy blow which had been given to their dominion in India. From Cape Comorin in the South to the banks of the Indus in the North, it was known that the ambitious designs of the English had been frustrated. Hundreds of soldiers commanded by British officers died from disease alone during this unfortunate campaign, and many more were lost during the retreat.

They had never thought that Holkar would be able to cause so much disaster and humiliation to them, Ever afterwards since the retreat, the very name of Holkar seems to have been one of terror to them. The Commander-in-Chief in his despatches ceased mentioning him by name but used to refer to him by such choice epithets as "the plunderer," "this monster", "the murderer" and such other phrases. Both the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief were bent on devising means to retrieve the disaster. The former in the course of his letter of the 11th September, 1804, wrote to Lake:

We must endeavour rather to retrieve than to blame what is past, and under your auspices I entertain no doubt of success. Time, however, is the main consideration. Every hour that shall be left to this plunderer will be marked by some calamity; we must expect a general defection of the allies, and even confusion in our own territories, unless we can attack Holkar's main force immediately with decisive success.... I perfectly agree with you, that the first object must be the defeat of Holkar's infantry in the field, and to take his guns;... Holkar defeated, all alarm and danger will instantly vanish; ..."

In the next chapter, we shall relate the critical position of the British in India at this moment and also the means devised by them to bring about the defeat of Holkar.

CHAPTER XXXV.

SITUATION OF AFFAIRS, AND CONSPIRACIES AND INTRIGUES AGAINST HOLKAR.

It has already been said that Monson's retreat placed the British in the most critical and awkward position possible. Referring to this retreat, General Wellesley wrote :—"I tremble at the political consequences of that event." The Commander-in-Chief was ordered to take the field in person so that the English might have an early opportunity of wiping away the disgrace which they had suffered. The Governor-General at the same time ordered his brother General Wellesley, who was at that time in Calcutta, to immediately return to the Deccan and to resume the political and military command of the affairs there. General Wellesley left Calcutta in the beginning of October, 1804.

It is necessary here to relate in detail the critical position of the English in India at this period.

General Lake, as said so often before, boasted of a 'secret manner' of managing affairs. His secret manner consisted in bribing and corrupting officers and men in the employ of Sindhia and intriguing with them against their master. His successes in Northern India were to be accounted for in this manner of carrying on intrigues. He fed the minds of men with smooth, specious and false promises. But when the Doab, that is, that portion of Hindustan which lies between the rivers Jumna and Ganges, passed into the hands of the British, the inhabitants were quite undeceived. They found that they had changed King Log for King Stork. The unsympathetic British under the authority and guidance of Lake committed all sorts of atrocities and excesses upon the non-Christian population of the Doab. Lake, as said in another place, showed himself as a vile monster when Commander-in-Chief in Ireland. He does not seem to have much changed his nature in India. But, what specially inspired the people of the Doab with hatred against the British was the indulgence of the latter in killing that inoffensive and useful animal, the cow. The great Akbar, than whom no other non-Hindu ruler of India better understood the feelings and prejudices of the Hindus, with his far-seeing statesmanship prohibited the Muhammadans from killing cows within his dominions. Even the latter-day effeminate and degenerate Mughal rulers, who by their misconduct and the re-imposition of that iniquitous poll-tax on the Hindus known as the *Jezia*, precipitated the downfall of the Muhammadan rule in India, tried to conciliate the feelings of the Hindus by refraining from killing the cow. For nearly 300 years or more, no cow had been killed in Hindustan for the sake of beef. But imagine the feelings of the Hindus when they found the British polluting their sacred city of Muttra by killing the cow,—an animal held in reverence by them and which had not been killed there by any beef-eater within the memory of the oldest men living. Their feelings were outraged and they naturally looked to

the independent princes of India to deliver them from the bondage of the English.

Monson, smarting under the disgrace and humiliation inflicted on him by Holkar, discovered a correspondence that had been going on between Holkar and the Raja of Bharatpur. Bharatpur is a small principality in Bundelcund and its Raja was a Jat prince. The Jats had asserted their independence and founded the principality of Bharatpur during the days of the decline and downfall of the Mughals in India. The founder of the principality was Raja Surajmal.

Bharatpur was one of those states with which the British entered into an alliance in 1803 when they were going to war with Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. The Jat prince Raja Ranjit Singh was the ruler of Bharatpur at this time. He was not a statesman. Had he been so, he would not have been so easily prevailed upon by the English to conclude an alliance with them and help them against Sindhia and the Raja of Berar. He does not even appear to have been an intelligent or energetic prince. This has been borne testimoney to by Lake himself. Writing to the Marquess Wellesley from Cawnpur on the 13th August, 1804, General Lake said:

"From the meeting I had with Rajah Runjeet Singh in Camp, and from common report, I am inclined to believe that his character is by no means of that daring stamp as to induce him readily to pursue measures so fraught with danger to himself as his present conduct would appear to indicate. His son, Koer Rundhere Singh, who was also in my Camp, is of a character equally indolent and devoid of ability."

A question here naturally arises whether the Raja of Bharatpur had been carrying on correspondence with Holkar to subvert the lately established power of the British. In the published Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley or of the Duke of Wellington, there is nothing to show, much less to prove that the Raja of Bharatpur was carrying on any secret correspondence with Holkar detrimental to the English in India. Even the Marquess Wellesley does not seem to have been convinced of the so-called treachery of the Raja of Bharatpur; for writing a letter marked 'Private' to Lake, so late as November, 26, 1804, the Governor-General observed:

"you will also, I trust, proceed agaist the Rajah of Bhurtpore, *if his treachery should be proved.*"

From the words put in italics it is evident that the Governor-General did not think that the Raja of Bharatpur had hostile designs against the English.*

* In reply to General Lake's letter of the 13th August, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote on the 22nd August, 1804:

"The documents transmitted with your Excellency's despatch afford ample proof of the existence of a traitorous design to engage the power of Jeswant Rao Holkar in the prosecution of purposes inimical to the British interests in Hindustan.

"I am however disposed to believe that Rajah Runjeet Singh, Rajah of Bhurtpore, and his son Koer Rundhere Sing, although deeply implicated in the existing design by their intercepted letters and communications, are rather to be considered as the instruments of their respective servants and adherents, than as principal contrivers of this nefarious project.

"The project has probably originated among the desperate characters, . . . and it appears reasonable to presume, that the intrigues and machinations of those abandoned adventurers have involved

Besides the Raja of Bharatpur was under obligations to them. On the 13th August, 1804, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"It may be proper to remark, that this treacherous correspondence appears to have commenced soon after Raja Runjeet Sing had entered into a treaty with the British Government, by which he was permanently released from the tribute formerly paid by him to the Mahrattas, and was carried on at a time when he was receiving the most undoubted proof of the friendship and favor of the British Government, by my having granted to him Sunuds, subject to your Excellency's confirmation, for countries of the annual revenue of about four lacs of rupees, which were contiguous to his former possessions, and not included as the line proposed by your Lordship as the boundary of the British possession.

Lake presumed treachery on the part of the Raja of Bharatpur, but in the intercepted correspondence there is nothing to implicate that prince. He forwarded the intercepted correspondence to the Governor-General. That the Marquess Wellesley also did not consider the Raja treacherous will be evident from the extracts of his letter to Lake, we have already given above. But the fact of the Raja having given shelter to the fugitive Holkar and his shattered forces beneath the walls of Deeg has been urged as a pretext to consider him as hostilely inclined to the English. In our opinion, the fact of the Jat prince Ranjit Singh not denying an asylum to Holkar while *in extremis* shows his magnanimity and brings out in bold relief the strong character of the Hindus noted for their high ideal of hospitality. When Holkar, defeated and pursued by the English, turned his steps towards Bharatpur, Raja Ranjit Singh had every thing to lose and nothing to gain by giving an asylum to Jeswant Rao. Of course, the law of hospitality, *as understood amongst the Asiatics in general, and Hindus in particular,* is a thing quite unknown amongst the Christians and natives of the Western countries. Hence, it is difficult for them to understand the motive of the Raja of Bharatpur to afford refuge to Holkar, who had been defeated and was being pursued by the English.

The hostile intentions of the Raja of Bharatpur against the English not being proved, it is necessary to explain the attitude of persecution which the latter adopted towards him. The time at which the British tried to open their campaign of persecution of the Raja of Bharatpur should be very particularly noted. It was the time when Holkar had inflicted humiliation and disaster on them. So it appers to us that the real cause of the intended campaign against the Raja of Bharatpur consisted in the defeat which the English had suffered from Holkar. It was considered politically expedient to show that they could beat some one, and so they determined to beat the Raja of Bharatpur, for that prince

the Rajah of Bhurtpore and his son in a design evidently contrary to their interests, and of which the success could not prove advantageous to any other class of persons than the mean, profligate, and indigent contrivers of the original plot."

The Governor-General seems to have taken a just view of the whole affair. But those 'abandoned adventurers' were mostly men who owed allegiance to the English. In fact, it was the inhabitants of the territories then lately acquired by the British who had become quite disgusted with their new masters and therefore were 'plotting' with the Raja of Bharatpur and his son.

was not expected to make any firm stand against the English, as on the 13th August, 1804, Lake wrote to the Governor-General that

"the power or resources of Raja Ranjeet Sing cannot reasonably give any cause of alarm for the result, should it be deemed expedient to punish his treacherous conduct."

Who were those who smelt hostile designs on the part of the Raja of Bharatpur against the English? It was Lake, the Commander-in-Chief, and his worthy protege, Monson; regarding them, the fact should be borne in mind that they had been smarting under the humiliation consequent on their late disasters. Dating his letter from Cawnpur, 13th August, 1804, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"Having for some time past had reason to believe that a correspondence very inimical to the British interests existed between Raja Runjeet Singh, the Raja of Bhurtpore, and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, I directed your Excellency's agent to inform Mr. Thomas Mercer, who is in charge of the police of the city of Muttrah, of my suspicions; and to desire that he would use the means which his vicinity to Bhurtpore and the Superintendents of the Police of Muttrah might afford him to discover the channel of this correspondence.

"Mr. Mercer, accordingly, having been informed by the people whom he had employed secretly for the purpose, that the accredited vakeel from Jeswunt Rao Holkar to Raja Runjeet Sing was then in the city, caused him to be apprehended, and his papers to be taken charge of and sealed until he should receive my further orders.

"The deposition of this person, by name Nerunjun Lall, taken before Mr. Mercer on the 1st instant, states that he has been long employed as the channel of communication between Jeswunt Rao Holkar and the Raja of Bhurtpore, and several zemindars in the Doab, and that the object of the correspondence carried on was the entire subversion of the British power and influence in Hindostan.

"I yesterday received from Lieutenant-Colonel Monson at Rampoorah, with a letter dated the 1st instant, several original letters which he had on that day intercepted, addressed by Koer Rundhere Sing, the eldest son of Raja Runjeet Sing, by others of his confidential servants, and by the above mentioned Nerunjun Lall to Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and to his confidential servants."

It is impossible to rely on the statement of Niranjan Lal implicating the Raja of Bharatpur, for it must not be forgotten that the Commander-in-Chief began his letter to the Marquess Wellesley, from which an extract has been given above, by writing,

"Having for some time past had reason to believe that a correspondence very inimical to the British interests existed between Raja Runjeet Sing, the Raja of Bhurtpore and Jeswunt Rao Holkar,"

from which it appears probable that Lake must have either coaxed or bullied Niranjan Lal or put words in his mouth to implicate the Raja of Bharatpur. The question also naturally arises, how was Lake inspired to believe the existence of a correspondence between the Raja of Bharatpur and Jaswunt Rao Holkar? Taking all these facts into consideration, we are inclined to the belief that Lake's desire to implicate the Raja of Bharatpur was based on considerations of political expediency as a set-off against the disasters that had then recently overtaken the English.

Assuming that the so-called intercepted correspondence which Lake forwarded to the Governor-General were genuine and not forgeries, there is nothing in the correspondence to show that the Raja of Bharatpur entertained hostile designs against them. The correspondence discloses the discontent and disaffection of those who had then recently come under the rule of the English. They at first owed allegiance to Sindhia, but now

they discovered that the new government under which they were placed, was altogether unsuited to them and hence they were anxious to throw off the yoke.

The correspondence also reveals the intrigues of Holkar with the inhabitants of Hindustan owing allegiance to the British and also with the ministers and subjects of the Raja of Bharatpur. In this there was nothing extraordinary. No surprise need be felt at this. The British should have considered the tactics of Holkar as a compliment to them, since imitation is the best form of flattery; and Holkar was imitating them in this respect. He was trying to take advantage of the discontent and disaffection of those who had come under their rule.

Lake, as has been so often said before, was a 'truculent ruffian.' It did not take long for the inhabitants of the Doab or the valley lying between the Ganges and the Jumna, who had lately been the subjects of Sindhia, to find out Lake's character. The Commander-in-Chief in lording it over the inhabitants of Hindustan, adopted methods not very dissimilar to those which had provoked rebellion in Ireland. The Marquess Wellesley had given a free hand to Lake in settling the newly acquired territories in Hindustan. The English at this time stood in need of money; so the Commander-in-Chief did not scruple to practise extortion on the inhabitants of the Doab; land revenues were enhanced to an extent which staggered and surprised even the oldest inhabitants who remembered the anarchy which at one time prevailed in the country under the rule of the latter-day degenerate Mughal Emperors at the time of the decline and downfall of the Empire. Even the barbarian invaders swooping over India left more subsistence for the natives of the country than the newly established machinery of land assessment introduced by the English. So one year's rule of the British was enough to disgust the inhabitants of Hindustan, and they naturally looked to Holkar to deliver them from the bonds of the British.

It was not only the land revenue assessment which created discontent and disaffection, but, as said before, the killing of cows in the holy city of Muttra was a thing quite abominable and revolting to the feelings of the Hindu population of Hindustan.*

Muttra, it should be remembered, was the scene of Krishna's boyhood and youth. A little tact on the part of the English should have dictated them to pursue the policy of Akbar the Great and prohibit the killing of cows at such a place as Muttra.

* At Muttra, sanctified with the traditions of Krishna's attending to the cows and calves, the killing of cows was particularly objectionable to the Hindus. Regarding cow-killing, the author of 'Krishna and Krishnaism,' writes :

"Krishna's love for the brute creation in general, cows and calves in particular, is of some importance at the present day, when the cow question is convulsing the whole of Hindu-India. It is not for us to vindicate the excesses which Hindus are charged with having committed in the name of their religion, nor should we be justified in defending lawlessness or anarchy on the plea of religion or religious edicts. And if we advert to the subject at all, it is with the object of showing that veneration for the cow is not the effect of this Swami's teaching or that Sannyasi's lectures. As an important trait in Hindu character, it is as old as the Puranas. It is not the Gorakshini Sabha which has instilled such veneration into the inner nature of the Hindus, but Krishna, whose ideal is ever present before them in sleep or waking, and they strive to follow the example and precepts of their Lord."

From the intercepted correspondence, if genuine, it appears then, that the inhabitants of the Doab were intriguing with Holkar and the Raja of Bharatpur to liberate themselves from the foreign yoke. It was convenient for the Commander-in-Chief to ignore the existence of discontent and disaffection then prevalent in Hindustan. He wanted to wipe out the principality of Bharatpur so that the disaffected persons living in territories ruled by his compatriots might not find a rallying point round the Hindu Raja of that State.

While the people owing allegiance to the English were thus disaffected with them, the allies of the latter in India also tried to sever their connection with them. It has been said before, that for the prosecution of hostilities against Holkar, the English had greatly depended on Sindhia for assistance and help. It is questionable if the English would have undertaken the war against Holkar, had they not expected assistance from Sindhia. That prince, though defeated and vanquished by them by fraud and other discreditable means, still possessed a large army. Sindhia had been promised that, after the conquest of Holkar, a large portion of the territory of the latter would be given to him. It has been already said that he sent a contingent under Bapuji Sindhia to co-operate with the English in their war against Holkar. But after some time Sindhia seems to have been convinced that any assistance which he might render to them in their unjustifiable and wanton war upon Holkar would not redound to his credit.

But he had, moreover, many grievances against the British. In his letter to the Governor-General, Dowlat Rao Sindhia very succinctly enumerated the large number of his grievances. The systematic manner in which the Resident at his Court was insulting Dowlat Rao was, to say the least, scandalous and disgraceful.

Dowlat Rao Sindhia's letter to the Marquess Wellesley, dated 18th October, 1804, is of such historical importance, that no apology is needed for making the following extracts from it. After the war, the English should have shown a generous spirit towards their vanquished foes, but such was not their practice in India. Dowlat Rao was called upon to assist them in their unholy war on Holkar. At that time he was experiencing the most severe pecuniary embarassment and he asked for some assistance from the British, but this was refused to him. In his letter to the Governor-General, Dowlat Rao Sindhia wrote :

"In these times of trouble and confusion my Government has sustained heavy losses, and had experienced the most severe pecuniary embarrassment, and that to enable me to collect an army, money was indispensably necessary ; that without money it was impossible to assemble an army, or to prosecute war ; that, as under the perfect union and identity of interests now subsisting between the two states, the loss and injury sustained by one must be considered to be the loss and injury of both ; if in consideration of the embarrassed state of my finances, the honourable Company's Government would, in the present crisis of affairs, grant me pecuniary assistance to the extent which might be requisite to prosecute the war, such assistance would be conformable to the dictates of that union and would therefore not be misapplied ; that if, however, there should be any hesitation about affording me such pecuniary aid, I requested that it might be given to me on loan, without interest, and the amount be afterwards deducted from the annual sum of twenty lac and fifty thousand rupees (which includes the revenues of Pergunnahs Dholpore, Baree, and others), that I am to receive from the honourable Company."

It appears that Sindhia had asked Mr. Webbe, the Resident at his Court, to represent to the Governor-General the severely embarrassed state of his finance and to grant him pecuniary assistance. It seems that the Resident treated Sindhia's request with contempt. So Sindhia wrote:

"Mr. Webbe however treated this representation with the utmost contempt, and never consented to afford the least degree of pecuniary assistance, but suffered the question to float in indecision, . .

"My friend! I once believed that Mr. Webbe faithfully represented to your Excellency an account of all transactions at this Court, but now that I perceive Mr. Webbe is capable of such inattention and neglect with regard to the adoption of these desirable and necessary measures, I am satisfied that he has never made any communication to your Excellency of my reiterated proposals, counsels or advice to him in the present important crisis of affairs."

When Dowlat Rao penned the above, it should be remembered that Mr. Webbe was still alive. But when the Governor-General received the letter, Mr. Webbe was dead and gone. Under the circumstance, the Marquess out of respect to the memory of the dead Resident, who had so faithfully carried out his policy based on Machiavelian suggestions, was bound to shield the character of Mr. Webbe. But it was clear that the Governor-General could no longer count upon the support of Sindhia in the unjust and wanton war he was then waging upon Holkar.

This letter of Dowlat Rao contained many grievances and allegations against the English, some of which even the Marquess Wellesley was compelled to admit were just and not fictitious. It will be remembered that as a postscript to the despatch to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated 15th June, 1804, the Governor-General in Council wrote that Dowlat Rao Sindhia had "formally renounced all claim to the district of Gohud and to the fortress of Gwalior." But from Sindhia's letter it seems that he never did so; for he wrote to the Governor-General:

"After the conclusion of the two treaties his Excellency General Lake gave the countries of Gohud and Gwalior, together with the fort of the latter, to the people of the Bhootpongra. The case however is that the countries of Gohud and Gwalior, together with the fort of Gwalior, have for a long period of time been annexed to my territory. At the time of the conclusion of the peace, I delivered to the honourable Major-General Wellesley a statement, under my own seal and signature, of all the countries and forts in Hindustan which I had ceded, together with a memorandum of their names and annual value. In that statement, however, the names of the countries of Gohud and Gwalior, with the fort of the latter, were not inserted. Had I ceded those countries their names also would unquestionably have appeared in that statement. The delivery of that territory and fort to the people of Bhootpongra and their occupation of them, therefore, was in direct violation of the treaty of peace."

Thus it was not true, as intimated by the Governor-General to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, that Sindhia had 'formally renounced all claim to the district of Gohud and to the fortress of Gwalior.' The manner in which the Marquess Wellesley tried to explain the cession of the fortress of Gwalior to the Rana of Gohud was such as Sindhia could not understand or comprehend. It will be remembered that both General Wellesley and Major Malcolm were against the cession of the fortress of Gwalior to the Rana of Gohud; and that General Wellesley declared his opinion that the so-called International Law on which the Governor-General had founded his claim

regarding the disposal of Gwalior was little understood in India. So this forcible deprivation of Gwalior by the English was still rankling in the breast of Dowlut Rao.

But his letter to the Governor-General contained many other grievances and allegations against the English. Here two grievances, which were well-founded and which even the Governor-General was bound to admit were just, will be mentioned. Sindhia wrote:

"It is conditioned in the treaty, that many troops must not be stationed in the Pergunnahs of Chumarcoondah, Jaumgaum, &c. There must be only Tehseeldars, or if any zamindar shall become refractory, or if any person shall excite disturbance within those Pergunnahs, the British troops (on the application of the Tehseeldars) will apply a remedy accordingly. In conformity to the obligations of treaty, Tehseeldars only have been stationed in those Pergunnahs the whole of which have been destroyed by the violence of turbulent people, and by the Bheels, and continue subject to the same depredations. Although the Tehseeldars state the circumstances to the officers commanding British troops and also to Killedar of Ahmednagar, which place is in the vicinity of those Pergunnahs, no one attends to them, nor is any attempt made to suppress these disorders; and in consequence, the whole of these Purgunnahs are one continued scene of devastation and not a trace of habitation or cultivation remains. If I propose to Mr. Webbe that I should despatch troops from hence to those Pergunhahs, he will not consent nor will he himself apply a remedy."

This was a just grievance of Sindhia. It appears to us that the Resident did not attend to it because it was the policy of the English to weaken Sindhia, by creating confusion, disorder and anarchy in his dominion. They would not allow Sindhia to afford protection to the lives and properties of his subjects, nor would they themselves "apply a remedy" to the disgraceful state of affairs that was prevalent in Sindhia's dominion.

Sindhia expressed his other grievance as follows

"In the second treaty it is provided that in consideration of the union established between the two states, the officers of the Company's troops will attend to the protection of my territories in the same manner as to the protection of the Company's. But notwithstanding Colonel Murray's coming to Ujjain, Jeswunt Rao Holkar invested the fort of Mundesoor during full two months, and plundered and laid waste the whole of that district, including that town; and in the same manner, while Colonel Murray was at Ujjain, Meer Khan, the Afghan, a partisan of Jeswunt Rao Holkar's, invested the fortress of Bhilsa and plundered the whole of that district and the town and fort which he captured; and yet no assistance or protection was afforded by the Colonel. What is to be thought of all these points which are contrary to the treaties? This however is certain, that the circumstances of this quarter are entirely unknown to your Excellency, else such a degree of procrastination on the part of the Company in fulfilling the obligations of frendship and the conditions of treaty were impossible."

It was a very just and legitimate grievance of Sindhia. But as usual, the Governor-General's reply was very tame and not to the point.

Sindhia's contingent had joined the English; but their subsequent defection and desertion are explained in a manner which throws a curious side-light on the military transactions of the English. If we are to believe Sindhia, and there is no reason why we should not credit him with truthfulness, he explains Monson's retreat before Holkar as due to the cowardice of that British officer. He writes:

"I dispatched orders to Bapojee Scindhia and to Suddasheo Rao to proceed with a force, consisting of six or seven battalions of infantry and of ten thousand horse, to join his Excellency General Lake ; accordingly those officers, notwithstanding the extreme distress of the troops under their command for their pay, in obedience to my orders, and in the hope that when they should effect a junction with the British army, his Excellency General Lake, in consequence of the union and perfect identity of the interests between the two states, would not fail to relieve their exigencies, set out for Kotah without a moment of delay, ... Bapojee Scindhia found that he could no longer sustain his troops without advancing them some money, and was absolutely compelled to dispatch Suddasheo Rao with a whole body of horse and infantry in different directions to seek a subsistence, . . . About this time an action took place with Jeswunt Rao Holkar, when Colonel Monson sent a verbal message to Bapojee Scindhia, desiring Scindhia to leave his baggage and Camp followers with the baggage, &c., of the British troops, and joining Mr. Lucan with his cavalry advanced to oppose Holkar. *Colonel Monson with the infantry, however, remained behind.* Bapojee Scindhia acted conformably to Colonel Monson's desire, and advancing ... encountered the enemy,. . . . The loss sustained by Bapojee Scindhia in killed and wounded amounted to seven hundred horse, and much plunder was also committed. *Colonel Monson, without bearing any share in the action, effected his retreat in the utmost confusion with the infantry, . . . to Kotah.* Bapojee Scindhia joined Colonel Monson on the road with the remainder of his broken troops."

The sentences italicised in the above extracts, prove to demonstration with what cowardice Colonel Monson effected his retreat before Holkar.

Reading the above, there does not appear to be any truth in the allegation of Amir Khan mentioned in his Memoirs,* that Monson's determination to retreat had been adopted by the treacherous advice of Bapuji Sindhia, who was in secret understanding with Jaswunt Rao. Had such been the case, had Bapuji Sindhia been at this time in secret understanding with Holkar, why should he have suffered such a terrible loss as that referred to by Dowlat Rao Sindhia, *viz* :

"The loss sustained by Bapuji Sindhia in killed and wounded amounted to seven hundred horse, and much plunder was also committed."

But there is no doubt that subsequently Bapuji Sindhia deserted the English and went over to and joined Holkar. This step of Bapuji is to be explained by their cowardice and also their selfishness in their safely retreating from Holkar and leaving him to bear the brunt of fighting. Moreover, his troops were clamouring for money, as their pay had been in arrears for several months. In the course of his letter to the Governor-General, Dowlat Rao, mentioning the selfishness of Monson, wrote :

"When Colonel Monson reached Kotah, he found himself unable to maintain his ground there, and withdrawing his troops accordingly from that place, crossed the Chumbul river in boats which he found ready for that purpose. Bapoojee Scindhia at the same time requested that, after crossing the river, the Colonel would allow the boats to return for the purpose of conveying his troops across the river, that they might be enabled to join him, but Colonel Monson never returned the boats. Bapoojee Scindhia, therefore, finding it impracticable to attempt to cross the river, without the assistance of the boats, took up a position close to Kotah. Holkar's army however arriving there, invested the place, and would have shortly seized the person of Bapoojee Scindhia, had not Raja Zalim Singh of Kotah sent a message to Bapoojee Scindhia, informing BapooJee, that if he did not visit Holkar, he would inevitably lose his life , ... Bapoojee Scindhia being extremely

* Memoirs of Amir Khan translated by Mr. Prinsep, p. 215.

distressed and embarrassed by the importunities of the troops, without the least hope of receiving any pecuniary assistance from me, was compelled ostensibly to espouse the cause of Holkar."

From the above extract then, we learn the reasons which made the contingent sent by Sindhia to assist the English desert them and join Holkar.

Not only did Sindhia's contingent desert the English, but Sindhia himself seemed to assume a threatening attitude towards them. Reading between the lines of the concluding paragraphs of the letter from which extracts have been given above, there is very little doubt that at this time, Dowlat Rao meditated uniting his forces with those of Holkar and going to war with the English for the purpose of recovering some of the territories of which he had been lately deprived by them. The English also knew this; they moreover suspected a confederacy of the Raja of Berar, Sindhia, Holkar and the Raja of Bharatpur. But they frustrated this combination of the Indian chiefs and princes.

Dowlat Rao wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"As the war with Holkar, in consequence of the officers of your Excellency's troops thinking too lightly of it, has now run to a great length, and my territory has been exposed to a last degree of devastation, and as Mr. Webbe neither fulfils the obligations of treaty or of friendship, nor returns any answers to any plans of operations for the conduct of the war, against the enemy, and to my propositions, all which are conformable to the conditions of treaty, nor adjusts any of these points; therefore a pair of hircarrahs are sent with this letter to your Excellency, for the purpose of communicating all these circumstances; and with a view to the arrangement of the disordered state of the affairs of my Government which hitherto, in consequence of the union subsisting between the two states, I have expected from the Company's officers, and which without my moving appears impracticable, nay, without that, the state of my affairs is daily becoming worse; I have, in whatever manner I was able, by loans raised funds for the provision of necessaries for my march, and for collecting my troops, and on the 20th of September marched from my encampment at Boorhanpore. I have also written to all the officers of my troops to join me from every quarter, and it is my intention to raise new troops. The friendship and union subsisting between us has induced me to write your Excellency all circumstances past, present, and to come.

" . . . . . . As Mr. Webbe, who resides with me on the part of your Excellency, practises delay and evasion in every point, and avoids the advance of money in the form of pecuniary aid, of a loan or on account of that which is clearly and justly due by the conditions of treaty, I have deemed it necessary to communicate all circumstances to your Excellency."

The concluding paragraph of this letter shows that Sindhia at this time meditated recovering his lost possessions from the English. So he wrote :

"My determined resolution now is, after having collected a numerous army, consisting both of old troops and new levies, to proceed to chastise the enemy ; for how can I be content to see a territory, which for a long time has been in my possession, and in the conquest of which crores of rupees have been expended and great battles have been fought, in the possession of another! It is no very difficult matter to wrest the territory from the hands of the enemy. Nothing else is necessary but the open and cordial support of friends."

If language has any meaning, it meant that Sindhia did not consider it a 'very difficult matter to wrest the territory from the hands of the' English. But before this letter reached the Governor-General, Mr. Webbe was dead. Mr. Jenkins had succeeded him. As Sindhia did not fare any better at his hands, to attract attention and to get

his grievances redressed, he was obliged to incarcerate this resident. It must be admitted that this act of Sindhia was against every received principle of the law of nations, though there were many extenuating circumstances.

Thus then the situation of the English in India was extremely critical. They had met with defeats and disasters from Holkar. The inhabitants of the territories which they had wrested from Sindhia were plotting to bring about their ruin. They had looked up to Sindhia for help; but that prince had been quite disenchanted of the English. The ill-treatment and studied insults and slights which he had received at their hands, especially at the hands of the residents at his Court, made him determined to sever the alliance with them.

The other non-Christian allies also could not be depended upon or trusted for help at this critical hour. The Raja of Berar was suspected of meditating war on the English. The Commander-in-Chief and his protege Monson discovered that the Raja of Bharatpur, his ministers and subjects were encouraging and assisting Holkar to hold out and overthrow the English.

Whenever the English looked round, the prospect appeared very gloomy for them; their state of affairs in India was extremely critical. How they managed to get out of the mesh which they had themselves woven will now be narrated.

The Marquess Wellesley clearly discerned the fact that it was around Holkar that all his disaffected and discontented allies and dependants were rallying: and that political expediency necessitated that Holkar should be crushed at all cost. To crush that Maratha chieftain, the Governor-General, however, did not rely on force alone. He knew that the sword alone would not succeed. Something more than mere force, something other than the sword, was necessary to vanquish Holkar. That something was *fraud.* The Governor-General advocated and opened a campaign of intrigues against Holkar.

Lake was for waging war against the Raja of Bharatpur and wiping out his principality from the map of India. But such was not the view of the Governor-General. In his letter to Lake, dated August 22, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote:

"I therefore hereby authorise and direct your Excellency to assure the Raja of Bhurtpore in the most distinct terms, of the determination of the British Government to discharge all the obligations of the existing treaty with him in the most strict and punctual manner, to apprize the Raja of the falsehood and wickedness of the imputations alleged against the British Government, respecting a supposed design of violating that treaty by any interference in the Raja's internal Government, or by any attempt to subject his territories, forts, or garrisons, to the Civil or Criminal jurisdiction of the Company's Courts. or to interpose the authority of the Company in any manner whatever in his Civil or Military Government, or in any manner whatever to depart from the terms of the subsisting treaty."

Thus the Governor-General desired to conciliate the Raja of Bharatpur, and, if possible, to alienate him from Holkar. But towards the latter, the Marquess Wellesley was not inclined to show any mercy. In his 'most secret and confidential' letter to the Commander-in-Chief, dated 28th July, 1804, the Governor-General wrote:

"No expectation can be entertained of any accommodation with Holkar as long as he shall

remain in any degree of force. In the actual situation of affairs, a defensive war on our part would be attended with the most serious consequences to our reputation and interests."

Again,

"Although the Governor-General is desirous of concluding an amicable arrangement with Holkar. on the basis of his instructions to the Resident with Scindhia, the principal object of the Commander-in-Chief will be directed to the means of making an early and vigorous attack on the resources of Holkar and of entirely reducing his power, if that measure should become necessary. Holkar must be made sensible of the superiority of our strength, before he will submit to the terms on which alone he can be safely admitted to the protection of the British power."

Even after penning the above, the Governor-General had the mortification and humiliation to see the English defeated by Holkar. The disasters which befell Monson were yet to come. And when he was acquainted with the nature of those disasters, the Governor-General advocated a campaign of intrigues against Holkar, for he knew fully that the English would not be able to overcome that Maratha Chieftain by means of force alone. So on the 17th August, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley wrote a 'private' letter to Lake, transmitting 'notes upon the present state of affairs with Holkar'; and also wished to receive Lake's 'sentiments upon these previously to the transmission of any official despatch.'

The Marquess Wellesley began his Notes marked 'A' as follows :

"Since the date of my last notes, it appears that Colonel Monson's detachment has retired altogether from Malwah with loss of guns, camp equipage, &c., and in great distress."

In these notes, the Governor-General sketched out the plan of campaign against Holkar. But he chiefly relied on *intrigues,* as will be evident from the following extracts :

"Holkar's army is not paid, it depends for its subsistence entirely upon plunder, and its means must be very precarious.

"No principle of union can exist in such a body as that commanded by Holkar. The Pathans and Mussalmans can have no attachment to Holkar, and most probably have no knowledge of each other, and the whole force must have collected about Holkar as a chief of note, and with the sole object of gaining a subsistence."

Reading the above there can be no doubt that the Marquess Wellesley implied that the Pathans and Musalmans in the employ of Holkar should be bought over by means of specious, smooth and false promises and intrigues.

After writing the above, the Governor-General was informed of the final retreat of Monson to Agra. So he wrote to Lake on 11th September, 1804:

"you will also take every step for confirming our allies, and for encouraging desertion from Holkar by renewing the proclamations of last year; or by other encouragements."

This advice of the Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief was something like putting the cart before the horse; since Lake had been already encouraging desertion from Holkar. In reply to the above letter, the Commander-in-Chief wrote on the 22nd September, 1804 :

"His (Holkar's) troops are in a strange state, some of them are again making proposals to come over; they shall be received if they come, but I have little faith in anything they say; *however, any-*

thing like disaffection among them; has its weight and may be of use, therefore it shall be encouraged."

The words put in italics in the above bring out in bold relief the intriguing nature of the Commander-in-Chief.

If Holkar was openly hostile to the English the latter were suspicious of Sindhia, because of the wrongs they had inflicted on him and so their guilty consciences were uneasy. Latterly, Sindhia had also assumed a threatening attitude towards them. Sindhia, although subdued, was not yet thoroughly crushed. Since the English were suspicious of him, it was necessary to intrigue with his officers and men. All his foreign servants had been bribed and tempted to betray their master. That was how the English obtained their victories over Sindhia. The latter, however, had another traitor in his Camp. His name was Jean Baptiste. It would have been better for Sindhia had he got rid of this servant of his. But for some reasons which remain unexplained, he still kept in his pay and maintained in his service, this half-caste. The Commander-in-Chief opened intrigues with him. In his 'private' letter to the Marquess Wellesley, dated Agra 22nd September, 1804, Lake wrote:

"Jean Baptiste would join him (*i. e.,* Colonel Murray), but cannot move from his present situation for want of subsistence for his troops. He is desirous of coming to me but requires a lac and-a-half of rupees to pay his troops. He is reported to be a good and fair man, and by what I have seen of him lately from his correspondence. has every appearance of being so; but I must be more convinced that he is so before I give him money, at any rate not to that extent; if he does anything worth notice it will be time enough to pay him then."

Thus it is evident that the English were carrying on intrigues with Jean Baptiste. It will be mentioned later on that Sindhia, although willing to co-operate with Holkar against the English, was unable to do so. The reason of his inability was understood by Holkar, who knew that Sindhia's inability was caused by the treachery of Jean Baptiste; and that such was the fact we have the documentary evidence of Lake himself to prove. Although on Holkar's representation, Jean Baptiste was placed under arrest by Sindhia, yet there was no direct evidence then to convict this man of treachery. But of this there is no doubt now.

In both the extention and consolidation of the power of the English in India, the Sikhs have played a very important part. In the war of the English against Sindhia, we have already mentioned how intrigues had been set on foot with the Sikhs by the former. The Sikhs were prevailed upon to remain neutral.

On the present occasion, also, the English saw the possibility of the Sikhs rendering assistance to Holkar. To prevent this, the English opened intrigues with them. On the 10th September, 1804, the Marquess Wellesley sent an "official and secret" letter to Lake. He began his letter as follows:

"I have the honor to transmit enclosed, for your Excellency's notice, an extract from a letter from Mr. A. Seton, the Governor-General's Agent at Bareilly, on the subject of the overtures received from a chieftain of the tribe of Sikhs, named Dolcha Sing, for establishing a connection with the British power.

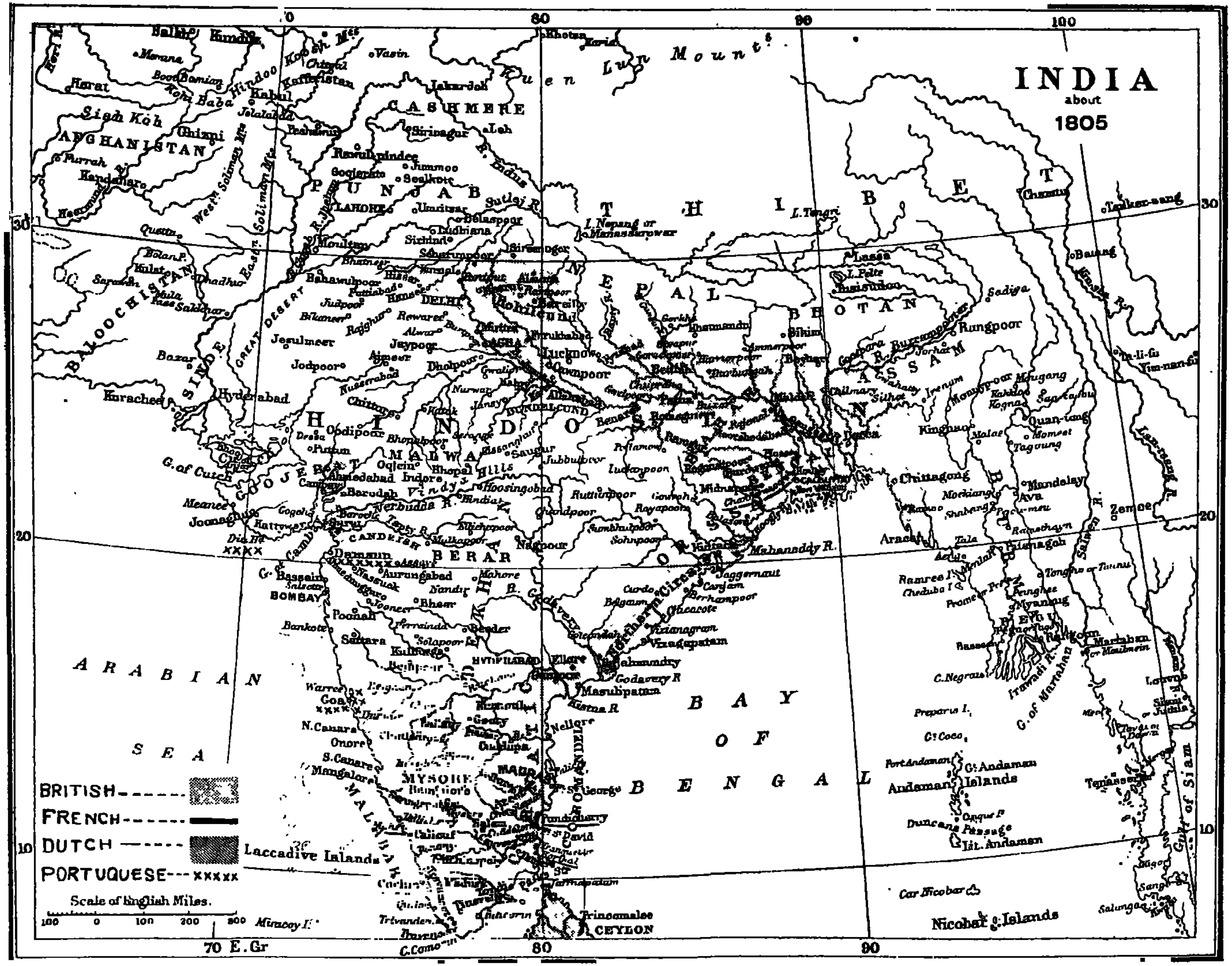
"Your Excellency will observe, from the information contained in that letter, that Dolcha Sing is

desirous of being subsidized by the British Government, and that proposals to that effect may be expected from him.

"It is possible that the services of this Chieftain may eventually be employed with effect in contributing to the protection of the Doab from the incursions of the predatory horse, when the river Jumna shall become fordable. I deem it advisable, therefore, to authorize your Excellency, if you should think proper, to subsidize Dolcha Sing, during the war. . . . "

The sentences put in italics in the above extract clearly indicate the nature of the intrigues which the English had been carrying on with the Sikhs. The letter from Mr. A. Seton is not published among the Despatches of the Marquess Wellesley, so we can only conjecture the nature of Dolcha Singh's proposals from the Governor-General's letter, an extract from which has been given above.

Such was the campaign of intrigues and conspracies opened by the English to gain their purpose. If ultimately Holkar did not succeed in getting the better of the English, it was not due to any want of valor or courage on his part, it was not that he lacked in any qualities which go to make a valiant soldier or a distinguished general, but his failure was due mostly to the net of intrigues and conspiracies which had been woven around him. The servants of the Company had raised traitors in his camp and they did not scruple to act on the maxims and suggestions of Machiavelli in gaining their selfish ends.



INDIA
about
1805
BRITISH
FRENCH
DUTCH
PORTUQUESE
Scale of English Miles.
100
0
100
200
300
70 E. Gr
80
90
100
30
20
10
AFGHANISTAN
CASHMERE
PUNJAB
THIBET
NEPAL
BHOTAN
ASSAM
BALOOCHISTAN
SINDE
HINDOSTAN
MALWA
BERAR
MYSORE
CEYLON
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
Laccadive Islands
Andaman Islands
Nicobar Islands
Kabul
Herat
Kandahar
Lahore
Delhi
Lucknow
Cawnpoor
Allahabad
Benares
Patna
Hyderabad
Kurachee
Bombay
Poonah
Goa
Surat
Nagpour
Aurungabad
Masulipatam
Chittagong
Mandelay
Ava
Juggernaut
Trincomalee
Mahanuddy R.
Godavery R.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HOLKAR'S MOVEMENTS.

After the retreat of Monson, Holkar thought that he would be able to sweep everything before him, and there was nothing improbable in his doing so, since the troops under the leadership of British officers had been very ignominiously beaten by him, and seemed to have been thoroughly demoralized. Notwithstanding all the precautions which the English had taken (and which will be referred to presently) to prevent the advance of Holkar, the latter experienced no difficulty in crossing into the territories then under their rule. It was merely a matter of walk over for Holkar to have come and occupied Muttra.

The situation of the English seemed hopeless and so they set afoot intrigues and conspiracies which have been already related in the last chapter. But although they had been intriguing and conspiring against Holkar since a very long time past, still it was a wonder to them that Holkar should have been able to collect any army at all and successfully resist, nay, defeat them. Writing on the 24th March, 1805, to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, the Governor-General in Council said:

"The Governor-General in Council is not yet sufficiently informed with regard to the detail of transactions and events in the southern and western provinces of Hindustan, which immediately followed the retreat of Jeswant Rao Holkar, to be able to explain, with accuracy and precision, the means by which Jeswunt Rao Holkar was enabled to considerably augment the number, and to revive the spirit of his troops, notwithstanding the precipitation of his flight, the real distress of his army, and the apparently desperate condition of his affairs. The investigation of the conduct and movements of the British detachments employed against the army of Jeswunt Rao Holkar may be expected to elucidate this subject and to afford the means of explaining in a satisfactory manner the causes of that change in the situation of affairs which produced the necessity of adopting a system of measures and arrangements entirely different from those by which the Governor-General in Council confidentely hoped to accomplish the effectual reduction of the power of Jeswunt Rao Holkar."

From the published records, however, it does not appear that any investigation as to 'the means by which Jeswunt Rao was enabled to considerably augment the number and to revive the spirit of his troops' was ever made. But we think that Holkar's success in augmenting the number of his troops was mainly due to the fact that the people living under the English had become so much disgusted with them that they looked upon Holkar as their deliverer from their bondage, and accordingly joined his standard.

Very extensive military preparations were made to defend the territories of India then under the rule of the Company against the threatened invasion of Holkar. In the despatch of the 24th March, 1805, of the Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee, it is stated:

"It appeared to the Governor-General to be proper that a detachment should be stationed in the neighbourhood of the passes into the British territories in Hindustan, at some position between Agra

and Delhi, for the purposes of defending those passes ; and that detachment should be of sufficient strength, both to preserve tranquility in those territories, and to defeat any part of Holkar's force which might pass in the rear of the Commander-in-Chief. The Governor-General observed, that a detachment thus formed and posted, might act as a body of reserve to the army of the Commander-in-Chief and might be strengthened from the garrisons of Agra, Delhi, Muttra, and other places.

"The defence of Delhi against an attack from the enemy was stated to the Commander-in-Chief to be an object of the greatest importance."

Not only were all the territories thus securely defended, but a net, as it were, was drawn round Holkar and it was confidently expected that that Maratha chief would be very easily quarried. Writing to the Secret Committee on the 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council observed :

"It appeared to be desirable that the subsidiary force for Dowlut Rao Scindhia should be prepared in Hindustan, and should form a part of the army of the Commander-in-Chief ; and on his Excellency's advance into Malwa, should march to Ougein to remain in that position prepared to act as the events of the campaign might render advisable. According to this plan, Holkar would have been placed between five separate British armies :

"1st—The army under the personal command of the Commander-in-Chief.

2nd—The detachment to be posted between Delhi and Agra, near the passes.

3rd—The detachment in Bundelkhand.

4th—The subsidiary force to be stationed at Ougein.

5th—The corps under the command of Colonel Murray to be posted on the frontier of Guzerat.

"It appeared to be highly improbable that Holkar should be able to evade the attack of all these detachments ; and it was the Governor-General's decided opinion that the proposed plan of operations was preferable to any system merely defensive.

"The speedy conclusion of the war appeared to be of the highest importance in every view of the question, and a vigorous and early attack on the enemy's main force offered the fairest prospect of such a result."

Notwithstanding all these precautions, Holkar succeeded in invading the territory of the Company. In their expectation of the speedy conclusion of the war, the English were sorely disappointed. In a previous chapter, we expressed our opinion that Jaswunt Rao was not a statesman, that he played into the hands of the unscrupulous servants of the Company and was the cause of all the troubles which befell the Maratha nation. But for his attack on Puna, the Peshwa would not have fled from his capital and signed the Treaty of Bassein, which brought about the Second Maratha War together with the loss of independence of the Marathas. But now Holkar seemed to have repented for his conduct. Although he did not show much statesmanship, the generalship exhibited by him was of a very high order. He outmanœuvred and out-generalled the English. Not only had he inflicted severe losses on Monson, but the manner in which he evaded the net that had been drawn round him by the English and invaded their possessions in Hindustan, spoke very highly of his knowledge of military tactics.

The English knew that in a fair fight they would not be able to overcome Holkar. And as according to their saying that in love and war everything is justifiable, they began intriguing against him, and also by holding out temptations tried to raise traitors in his camp. They encourged among Holkar's troops a spirit of desertion.

A guilty conscience does not know what tranquility and peace of mind mean, and is consequently never happy. The Company's Government of India of those days were very uneasy on account of their guilty conscience. They smelt danger where it is questionable if any had existed. It was supposed that the successes which Holkar had won, encouraged the Maratha princes to combine again and recover some of their possessions of which they had been very unrighteously deprived in the previous year. Of all the independent Maratha princes, the Raja of Berar was the weakest. The sin of the father is visited on the son. The immediate predecessor of the Berar Raja had greatly helped the English in getting a footing in India, and it has already been narrated how they repaid his successor. Now that they had met with nothing but disasters and defeats from Holkar, it was political expediency to show to the world that they could beat some persons. These persons were chosen to be the Raja of Bharatpur and the Raja of Berar, because both these princes were considered to be very weak and their resources very insignificant compared with those of the Company.

It was one of the Christian kings named Olaf who chanted centuries ago:

> "Force rules the world. Has ruled it, will rule it.
> Meekness is weakness. Force is triumphant."

By the manner in which the Raja of Bharatpur had sumbitted to the dictates of the English without even the show of resistance, it was certain that he was not a powerful prince. Accordingly they thought that they would be able to crush him very easily.

The Second Maratha War brought out in bold relief the weak points in the military organization of the Raja of Berar. When the English discovered the weakness of that prince, they deprived him of all his fertile provinces and reduced his power and resources to an extent which made him quite helpless and incapable of ever raising even his little finger against them. The latter, knowing the weakness and helplessness of the Berar Raja, thought it a good policy to altogether wipe out his independent state from the map of India. He was accused of harbouring designs against them, which it is very questionable that he ever did. But whether he did so or not, the English were bent upon humiliating him at all costs. In reviewing the whole transactions after the lapse of a century, it is impossible for any impartial and unprejudiced historian not to condemn, in the strongest language possible, the manner in which the English treated the Raja of Berar. In the despatch of the Secret Committee dated 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council wrote :

"The Governor-General deemed it expedient to issue instructions to the Resident at Nagpore, directing him to take a proper opportunity of apprizing the Raja of Berar in *the most public manner* of the information which the British Government had received with regard to his proceeding *that the Governor-General had deemed it necessary, without awaiting any explanation to make preparatory arrangements for the eventual purpose of repelling aggression and punishing treachery on the part of the Raja;* that accordingly Major-General Wellesley had returned to the army of the Deccan, with orders to march directly to Nagpore in the event of any unquestionable indication which the Raja might manifest of a design to commit acts of hostility against the British Government or its allies, or of any proceedings of the Raja in favour of our enemies. That the Governor-General was also prepared to take further measures for the just

punishment of the Raja of Berar in such an event ; . . . the Governor-General resolved to call forth the whole power and resources of the Company against a state so devoid of every principle of good faith, and not to desist until the Government of the Raja should have been effectually reduced."

From the words put in italics in the above, it is evident that the Governor-General was bent on encompassing the ruin of the Raja of Berar and even lacked the decency, not to say the courtesy, of enquiring into the correctness of the charge of hostile designs on the part of the Raja. The Marquess Wellesley considered it a matter of political expediency to totally crush the Raja, but he was an expert dissembler of more than common Western dissimulation. His instructions to the Resident at Nagpur conclusively prove his perfidious nature and intriguing spirit. In writing to the Secret Committee on the 24th March, 1805, he said :

"The Resident, however, was directed to suspend these representations until he should have learned the result of the Commander-in Chief's first operations against Holkar, unless circumstances should render an immediate statement of them useful and necessary.

"The Resident was at the same time instructed to assure the Raja of the most amicable disposition of the British Government towards him while he should continue to abide by his engagements under the late peace ; &c,, &c."

The above sentences, and especially those put in italics, show the hypocritical manner in which the Governor-General tried to deal with the Raja. While he professed 'the most amicable disposition' towards the Raja, he was, at the same time, devising means and schemes to cut his throat. He was only biding his time to do so.

That the English had wronged the Raja, they believed in their heart of hearts. So with their guilty consciences, they presumed that the Raja had been plotting agaist them. The Governor-General in Council, in the despatch under reference, mentioned the nature of the Raja's grievances against the English :

"It manifestly appeared not merely by the Raja's rejection of those beneficial articles, but by the general tenor of his declarations and those of his ministers, that the Raja still considered the alienation of the provinces in question to be an act of injustice and a violation of faith on the part of the British Government."

The Raja of Berar was weak and therefore the servants of the Company did not scruple to freely bleed him. The Resident at the Court of the Berar Raja was a native of Scotland named Mountstuart Elphinstone. We shall have occasion to say a great deal regarding him in another place. It is only proper here to say that, breathing the atmosphere of the corrupt political school of the Wellesleys, he could not have been expected to show much consideration for the independent princes of India ; for it was the creed of the politicians and statesmen of those days to use fraud and force to overawe and deprive Indian princes of their independence and worldly possessions. Elphinstone rose to eminence by becoming a votary of that creed. The manner in which he bullied and badgered the Raja of Berar can hardly be regarded as a matter of credit either to him or to the Christian government which employed him.

It will take long to narrate the manner in which the Resident persecuted and annoyed the Raja of Berar. The Governor-General in Council in the despatch to the Secret Committee referred to above took pride in mentioning the doings of the Resident. The Raja of Berar was weak and so he had to put up with the humiliation to wihch

he was subjected. But it was fortunate for him that Holkar was not yet vanquished. Had it been so, there is no doubt that this principality would have been then wiped out of the map of India.

Although greater danger was to be apprehended from Sindhia, yet the policy pursued towards him was of a totally different nature from that adopted towards the Raja of Berar. This was solely to be attributed to the fact that Sindhia was more formidable than, and not so weak as, the Raja of Berar.

Upon the cowardly retreat of Monson to Agra, Jaswunt Rao, as said before, advanced triumphantly with his army and took possession of Muttra. That he succeeded in doing so, notwithstanding the large garrison which the British had thrown in there, shows that the troops under the command of the British officers had been thrown into confusion and alarm at his approach. Muttra was abandoned at his approach.

It does not appear that Holkar had any designs at this time upon the territories of the Company in Hindustan. The sacred city of the Hindus had been polluted by the Christians, allowing that very useful animal, the cow, to be butchered within its walls. Having delivered the sacred city from the hands of the English, he thought that his task had been done. The reconquest of, and expulsion of the British from Hindustan was at this time far from his mind. Had he been so inclined, he could have as easily occupied Delhi as he had done Muttra.

It seems to us that Holkar stayed at Muttra to mature plans for the recovery of his dominions, for it was known to him that Colonel Murray from the side of Guzerat and Colonel Wallace from Deccan had been advancing on his possessions in Malwa and the Deccan respectively.

Colonel Murray, although at one time, that is on the 1st of July, he commenced his retreat towards the Myhee, and thus did not join Monson, was, as soon as Holkar had proceeded towards Hindustan, busily engaged in intriguing, and also advancing on to Holkar's dominions. From the Despatch of the Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee dated 24th March, 1805, it would seem that Colonel Murray had been engaged in encouraging desertion among the adherents of Jaswunt Rao.

Although the Governor-General in Council did not authorize Colonel Murray to encourage desertion among the adherents of Holkar, it is more than probable that that officer must have done so by means of smooth, specious and false promises to gain his ends. For on no other hypothesis, can his success in capturing all the possessions of Holkar in Malwa without fighting any battles, be reasonably explained. That English officers could *successfully* encourage treachery and desertion shows the foolishness, degeneracy and absence of patriotism of considerable numbers of Indians.

On the 5th July, 1804, Colonel Murray resumed his march towards Ujjain, at which city he arrived on the 8th of the same month without having encountered any opposition. The Governor-General in Council wrote to the Secret Committee, on the 24th March, 1805, that,

"During the continuance of Colonel Murray's detachment at Ujjain, that officer took possession *without any resistance,* of the whole of the territory in the occupation of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, situated in that quarter, and of Indore, the capital of the possessions of the family."

From the words which have been put in italics above, it seems to us evident that Colonel Murray must have encouragad desertion among the adherents of Jeswunt Rao and thus succeeded in occupying that Chief's possessions without encountering any resistance.

Wallace, who had been left in command of the British forces in the Deccan on the departure of General Wellesley for Calcutta, marched from Puna on the 22nd of August. He crossed the Godavery with his infantry at Paithan, about the 18th of September and on the 27th was joined at Forkabad by Colonel Haliburton, whose march, as well as that of Colonel Wallace, had been impeded by the severity of the weather: and on the 30th Wallace was joined by his cavalry, which proceeded higher up the Godavery than Paithan in seach of a ford.

Early in the month of October, the Peshwa's contingent joined Wallace. During the course of that month, Chandor was captured as well as several other forts belonging to Holkar in the Deccan. The possession of these forts by the English deprived Holkar of all his possessions to the southward of the Tapti.

Although Holkar was pursuing a career of conquest in Northern India he felt the loss of all his possessions in Malwa and the Deccan. His long stay in Muttra must have been occasioned by his devising plans and making preparations for the recovery of his lost possessions. At the time when he meditated hostilities with the English, he had sent an agent to the Resident at Puna who wished to be informed whether the British Government would receive proposals of accommodation from Holkar. The Resident at Puna, at this time, was Colonel Close, to whom the agent delivered a letter from Holkar, addressed to the Governor-General, but evidently intended for General Wellesley, in which Holkar asserted that he was compelled by the aggressions of Lake to have recourse to arms, and attempted to vindicate his conduct in his intercourse with the British Government.

It was this vindictive spirit of the servants of the Company which led Holkar to solicit the co-operation of Sindhia, the Raja of Berar and the Raja of Bharatpur. With their characteristic short memory, forgetting the obligations they owed to Holkar and lacking in gratitude, the servants of the Company were plotting for his destruction. The stay of Holkar at Muttra seems to have been due to his efforts there for devising means to counteract their plot. But he was unfortunate in all his undertakings. The English took advantage of his stay at Muttra by spreading reports of his destitute condition, which reports were calculated to encourage desertion among his adherents and thus reduce his power of resistance.

While Holkar was resting his wearied limbs in Muttra, Lake was actively engaged in making preparations to attack and annihilate him. He marched from Cawnpur on the 3rd, arrived at Agra on the 22nd of September, and, assembling his army at Sikandra, marched on the 1st of October towards Muttra. As the Commander-in-Chief's army approached Muttra, Holkar retired towards Delhi with the intention, no doubt, of capturing it and with it the person of the Mughal Emperor. But ever since the capture of that Imperial city by, Lake, it had been very strongly garrisoned by troops under

the command of British officers as a safeguard against surprises. Extra vigilance was exercised when the presence of Holkar in the Doab, and especially his stay in Muttra, was known. The officer who was at this time holding the command of Delhi was Colonel Ochterlony. As was customary with the English residents in India of those days, this officer maintained a seraglio consisting of women of very questionable morals. Very many Europeans in those days most promiscuously led immoral lives. But having native women of low or no morals gave them the advantage of learning the language, and becoming acquainted with the views and opinions of the people of the country. It was thus political considerations which prompted these Europeans in keeping harems. These harems were the centres of intrigues. It was absolutely necessary for the English who were then trying to establish their power in India to be well supplied with spies—and female spies, if clever, were of much more service than those of the male sex. They have more tact. They have better opportunites of worming men's and women's secrets out of them. The influence which Ochterlony wielded in Delhi was greatly to be attributed to the women he had in his keep, who, possessing an access to the Zenana of the Mugal Emperor, and of other notabilities, kept him informed of all the gossip and news of that Imperial city as well as of Court intrigues.

Although the Emperor had been released from the guardianship of the Marathas, the Company had not as yet made any arrangement respecting the maintenance of him and his family. The mind of the Emperor was fed with hopes, and at that time, when Holkar marched towards Delhi, there can be no doubt that the Emperor threw all the influence he possessed on the side of the English. It was no wonder then that Holkar did not succeed in capturing Delhi.

When Holkar did not succeed in capturing Delhi, and when he knew that Lake was on full march in his rear from Muttra, he retreated towards Saharanpur. He had hoped assistance from and co-operation of the chieftains who ruled in that part of the country. But he was bitterly disappointed in all these hopes. It will be remembered that the Governor-General had authorised Lake to intrigue with that Sikh chieftain Dolcha Singh, as well as with Bambu Khan, the Begam Samru and other petty chieftains residing in and about Saharanpur. Such being the case, it was not possible for Holkar to succeed against the British.

It is not necessary to mention in detail the battles which took place between the armies of Holkar and of the British after Holkar retreated from Delhi. The Commander-in-Chief arrived at Delhi on the 17th October, two days after Holkar's retreat. Holkar, not finding any support from the chieftains of the country of Saharanpur, retreated towards the territory of the Raja of Bharatpur, from whom as a Hindu, he, as a refugee and in distress, expected treatment according to the laws of hospitality. The Commandar-in-Chief with the troops under his command did not cease pursuing him and fought several battles, preliminary to that of Dig and the siege of Bharatpur, which will be narrated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SIEGE OF BHARATPUR

Colonel Burn was detached to pursue Holkar on his retreat from Delhi. This officer had been commanding Saharunpur, but had been recalled to the defence of Delhi. He left Delhi and crossed the Jumna on the 26th of October. Although he was in close proximity of Holkar's troops, there was no fighting. In the meanwhile, Holkar discovering the fact that he could not obtain any help from the chieftains of Saharanpur commenced his march towards the territory of the Raja of Bharatpur, where he expected to find an asylum. It was not Burn alone who was in pursuit of Holkar, but the Commander-in-Chief in person set out to pursue him. On the 31st of October, Lake, with his three regiments of Dragroons, three regiments of native cavalry, and the mounted artillery, crossed the Jumna to pursue the cavalry of Holkar. At the same time General Fraser, with the main body of the infantry, two regiments of native cavalry and the park of artillery, was directed to move upon the infantry and artillery of Holkar, which had reached the neighbourhood of Dig, in the territory of the Raja of Bharatpur.

"The object of this double movement was," writes Mr. Mill (vi. p. 416), "to force both the cavalry and the infantry of Holkar to risk an action with the British troops, or to make him fly from Hindustan, under circumtances of so much ignominy and distress, as would have a disastrous effect upon the reputation of his cause."

At this time Holkar was encamping in a place called Shamli ; here Lake arrived on the 3rd November, on whose approach Holkar marched in a southerly direction with the intention of retiring into the territory of the Raja of Bharatpur.

General Fraser marched from Delhi on the 5th of November in pursuit of Holkar's infantry and arrived in the neighbourhood of Dig on the 12th November. On the following day, that is, on the 13th, a battle was fought between Holkar's and the troops under the command of Fraser. It was a very dearly bought victory for the English. Holkar's pieces of ordnance fell into the hands of Fraser's troops. The Maratha army, now vanquished and defeated, had to take refuge in the fort of Dig. Fraser fell mortally wounded in the battle and so the command devolved on Monson. The loss of the British was severe ; no less than 643 were killed and wounded and of these 22 were British officers. It is impossible to correctly estimate Holkar's loss. According to the statement of the English writers, Holkar is said to have lost 2000 men and 87 pieces of ordnance.

Lake was in pursuit of Holkar's cavalry, whom he surprised and encountered at Farrukhabad on the 17th November. It is said that Lake had, from the 31st October, marched at the rate of 23 miles daily. Although he surprised Holkar, he was not able to either capture him or annihilate his cavalry. It is said that the explosion of a tumbril, as the British troops approached the Maratha camp, gave the alarm to

Holkar, and he fled with his followers to Dig. Again we find Holkar out-manoevring and out-generalling the Commandar-in-Chief, for we fail to understand, that had Lake shown military tactics of a very high order, how he could have allowed Holkar to escape to Dig. Even in his pursuit of Holkar, he was unable to overtake him. Of course, Holkar was suprised and his camp was thrown into confusion, but the manner in which he eluded the pursuit of, and escaped capture by the English shows that he understood the art of warfare better than the Commander-in-Chief.

At Dig the infantry of Holkar had been defeated by the forces under the command of General Fraser. Holkar was not present there in person.

The British were now very jubilant. The objects for which the war had been undertaken by them were now accomplished. In their usual pompous style, the Governor-General as well as the Commander-in-Chief proclaimed to the world the victories they had obtained over Holkar's forces.

But all the mutual congratulations of the two self-sufficient persons were premature. The affairs of the 13th and 17th November, 1804, did not end the war or enable the Governor-General to place the peace of India on a secure basis. The escape of Holkar was not considered an event of much consequence by the Commander-in-Chief. But Holkar's flight was a turning point in the History of the Rise of the Power of the Christians in India, for it was pregnant with consequences which were highly beneficial to the Indians. The Governor-General fully realized the danger of Holkar's escape. So he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief :

"It is unfortunate that Holkar's person should have escaped you ; you are equally impressed with me by the absolute necessity of seizing or destroying him. Until his person be either destroyed or imprisoned, we shall have no rest. I therefore rely on you to permit no circumstance to divert you from pursuing him to the utmost extremity."

Dig, as said before, is in the territory of the Raja of Bharatpur. It was here that Holkar with his cavalry and infantry found shelter. The Raja of Bharatpur had concluded an alliance with the Christian Government of India and so his affording protection to Holkar was looked upon by them as a piece of treachery. But if we carefully and impartially analyse the conduct of the Raja, we shall be obliged to absolve him from the charge of treachery levelled against him by the English writers of Indian History. Although the Raja had been well-treated for the services he had rendered to the British during their war with Sindhia, he had reasons to be alarmed at their high-handed proceedings. Mill writes :*

"Offence appeared to have been taken by the Raja at the violent manner in which the British resident at Muttra had decided some disputes respecting the traffic in salt ; and some alarm was conveyed to his mind by a report that the English Government was to introduce the English Courts of justice into his dominions."

H. H. Willson, as a footnote to the above, adds :

"Another cause seems to have been a religious feeling. The letters of the agent repeatedly allude to the Raja's horror at the cow-killing propensities of the infidel English."

* *History of India*, Vol. VI. p. 420.

Although it is probable that the Raja did not at first entertain any hostile designs against the British government, the conduct of the latter towards him, obliged him, it seems, to throw in his lot with that of Holkar. In that he considered his safety lay.

Unfortunately the Governor-General had entrusted the negotiations with the Raja of Bharatpur to the hands of Lake. After the perusal of all the despatches written to the Governor-General by the latter there is little room for doubting the fact that the Commander-in-Chief was bent upon war with the Raja of Bharatpur. Moreover the manner in which the Raja was being bullied by the Britishers was such as no one possessing the least grain of self-respect in him would tamely submit to. He was not given an opportunity to explain his conduct, but placing implict confidence in in the genuineness of the intercepted correspondence, the English concluded that the Raja had been guilty of treachery and tried to interfere in his state concerns. On the 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council wrote to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, regarding the proceedings which had been adopted towards the Raja of Bharatpur :

"The Commander-in-Chief was desired at the same time to communicate to Rajah Runjit Sing, copies of all the intercepted letters addressed to Jeswunt Rao Holkar, under the seals of the Raja and his son ; to warn the Raja of the ruin in which he and his family would inevitably be involved by the continuance of the detected intercourse between the State of Bhurtpore and Jeswunt Rao Holkar, and to require the Raja and his family to relinquish all communication with Holkar, and every other enemy of the British Government under pain of being considered and treated as a public enemy.

"The Commander-in-Chief was also directed to apprize the Raja of his determination to seize and bring to justice all the agents concerned in his traitorous correspondence wherever they might be found, and to inform him that the indulgence and consideration which had been manifested towards him and his son, would not be extended to the inferior of the conspiracy ; and the Commander-in-Chief was accordingly directed to proceed without delay, to seize all the agents and instruments of this conspiracy, although they should take refuge within the territories of our allies and dependants, and particularly to seize all those who might remain within the territory of Bhurtpore, informing the Raja that the British Government was resolved not to admit of any asylum for criminals of this description.

"In conformity to the spirit of this communication, the Commander-in-Chief was authorized and directed to bring to trial before a court martial, all personss concerned in the conspiracy who might be arrested within the territories of our allies, or dependents, and in such parts of our possessions as might not have been rendered subject to the laws and regulations of the British Government, and to inflict such punishment as might be awarded by the court martial."

Now, the instruction which the Governor-General issued to the Commander-in-Chief were not such as to allay the apprehensions of the Raja of Bharatpur regarding the ulterior designs of the English upon his independence and upon his dominion. As said before, the Raja was not given an opportunity to explain his conduct. He was not even asked to co-operate with the English in suppressing the conspiracy. On the contrary, he was ordered to hand over those suspected of conspiracy to the latter for trial. This peremptory demand of the Governor-General touched the most susceptible part of the Raja. Of course, the Christian Europeans do not understand the laws of hospitality as observed and practised by non-Christian Asiatics. No true Oriental would

hand over to justice even the vilest criminal who comes as a refugee and seeks his protection. Such being the case, it was altogether out of the question that the Raja would deliver into the hands of the English those of his subjects whom they suspected of conspiracy. Moreover, a step like this would have lowered the prestige of the Raja in the eyes of all his subjects.*

In self-defence the Raja had to do something to counteract the humiliation which the English were proposing to subject him to. No surprise need be felt, therefore, if he rendered assistance to Holkar, since that Maratha prince was being looked upon as the deliverer of India from the yoke of the foreigners.

Although the Marquess Wellesley was not much in favour of going to war with the Raja of Bharatpur. Lake was of a different opinion. Like a blood-thirsty hound, the Commander-in-Chief delighted in the sight of bloodshed. On the 27th November, 1804 , in a letter marked 'Private,' Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley:

"I last night received the notes from Mr. Edmonstone, respecting my conduct towards the Bhurtpore Raja. They like all other directions from your Lordship, are perfectly clear, . . . *I will not involve Government in a war if possible with this ungrateful man; but I fear he had entered so far into it already, that it will not be in my power to avoid attacking and reducing him and his forts without delay.*

In the words put in italics in the above extract Lake clearly sounded the note of war. Again, on the 30th November, 1804, in a 'private' letter to the Marquess Wellesley, he wrote :

"I have received all your notes and remarks upon this war, which I am in hopes will not only end well, but shortly. What this treacherous fool Runjeet Sing can mean is beyond all comprehension ; . . . he certainly deserves no favour from our Government, as his conduct has been the most unprovoked and violent that ever was heard of . . . I am fully aware of the necessity of avoiding war as much as possible at this moment as it would appear there is a general combination against our government ; and yet I cannot help thinking when the two last actions are fully known, that neither Sindhia or the Raja of Berar will ever join themselves to a man of broken fortune like Holkar."

Thus then it is evident, the Commander-in-Chief wanted war. The Governor-General also, as will be shortly related, fell into his views. It was resolved upon by both of these high English functionaries in India that the Raja of Bharatpur should be punished for his having afforded shelter to Holkar and his forces. So with a very light heart they entered into the war with the Raja of Bharatpur.

It was decided to lay siege to the fort of Dig in which Holkar and his army taken refuge. A battering train from Agra was ordered. Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley on the 30th November, 1804 :

"I shall move forward tomorrow towards Deig, and see what can be done before the battering train comes up. I may possibly get at Holkar once more. I believe he has no force left, at least so inconsiderable that they are little more than an escort for himself. They say a few men of his brigades remain. This report shall be ascertained whether true or falsely very shortly."

* The English demanded the surrender of those who had taken refuge at Bharatpur ; and the Raja earns our respect by daring their anger, and not complying with their demand.

On the 1st December, 1804, Lake commenced his march to Dig, which place was reached on the 8th December. It was resolved to reduce Dig by storm. The battering train and necessary stores arrived from Agra, on the 10th; and ground was broken on the 13th. In ten days, that is, on the 23rd, a breach was made in the wall, which was stormed and taken at mid-night with the loss on the part of the British of 227 men killed and wounded. On the ensuing day and night the town and fort of Dig were evacuated, the garrison flying in the direction of Bharatpur.

So long the Governor-General had issued no definite instructions to the Commander-in-Chief regarding his taking any steps against the Raja of Bharatpur. Although Lake had fully made up his mind to go to war with the Raja, the Marquess Wellesley had not sanctioned this. The latter was watching the progress of events. In the Despatch of the 24th March, 1805, the Governor-General in Council wrote to the Secret Committee of the East India Company :

"The expediency of attacking the Raja of Bharatpur or of overlooking his conduct appeared to depend in a material degree upon the operations which it might become necessary to adopt against Holkar. If it should become necessary for the Commander-in-Chief to pursue Holkar in such a direction, and to such a distance as would place Bharatpur between his army and the Brstish positions it would be necessary to decide—

"First, whether it would be prudent to leave the State of Bhurtpore in full possession of its power and resources in the rear of our army.

"Secondly, whether in the event of the above question being decided in the negative, it might not be practicable to leave a force adequate to the reduction of the Raja's territories, or at least of sufficient strength to impose a restrain upon the forces of the Raja, although unequal to the operation above described while the main army should act against Holkar.

"Thirdly, whether in the event of neither of these two modes being practicable it would be more hazardous to suspend the pursuit of Holkar untill the Raja of Bharatpur's power should be reduced, or to leave that state in possesion of its power annd resources in the rear of our army."

"The Governor-General was of opinion that these questions should be decided by the judgment of the Commander-in-Chief, and accordingly desired that his Excellency would exercise his discretion with respect to the adoption of one or other of these plans."

Lake was thus given a free hand to choose between the maintenance of peace and declaration of war with the Raja of Bharatpur. As has been said so often before, Lake was in favour of war. For it seems to us that at the time when Lake marched towards Dig, the prolongation of the war and the subsequent siege of Bharatpur could have been averted, had the English been inclined towards the maintenance of or rather the bringing about of peace with the Raja of Bharatpur.

Holkar was also now in *extremis*. There is no reason to suppose that he would not have listened to overtures of peace from the English.

They thought that they had to deal with weak enemies, and nothing short of their utter annihilation, and annexation of their territories whould have satisfied them.

When the Governor-General came to know of the reduction and fall of Dig, instead of making overtures of peace to the fallen foe, a step which would have shown his generous and magnanimous nature, he did not hesitate to give final instructions to Lake to make war on the Raja. In the despatch marked "Secret and official" and dated Fort William, December 20, 1804. The Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lake :

"I entirely approve the measures which Your Excellency has already pursued for the purpose of frustrating the effects of the Raja's treachery and hostility, and for the reduction of the fortress of Deig. The entire reduction of the power and resources of the Raja of Bharatpur however, is now become indispensably necessary, and I accordingly authorize and direct Your Excellency to adopt immediate arrangement for the attainment of that desirable object, and for the annexation to the British power, in such manner as Your Excellency may deem most consistent with the public interests, of all the forts, territories, and possessions belonging to the Raja of Bharatpur."

At the time when the Commander-in-Chief received the above letter from the Marquess Wellesley, he was busily engaged in prosecuting the siege of Bharatpur. The loss of Dig was a great blow to the Raja, but to his credit let it be said that he did not desert the refugee Holkar and was willing to share all the misfortunes with him. He did not submit to the humiliating terms proposed to him by the victors and rather risked all that he possessed than play false to the traditions of his country and religion by betraying Holkar who had sought his protection.

With the loss of Dig, the Raja had lost all his territories, except the town of Bharatpur. The surrounding country had been taken charge of by the English. Upon the resources of Bharatpur alone, he had to depend for his existence. The town of Bharatpur was eight miles in extent and was surrounded by a mud wall of great thickness and height and a very wide and deep ditch filled with water. The fort was situated at the eastern extremity of the town ; and the walls had bastions, mounted with artillery. The whole force of the Raja, with many of the inhabitants of the surrounding country together with the shattered battalions of Holkar's infantry was thrown into the place. Holkar's cavalry remained outside the town and eluded the pursuit of the English by their rapid marches and not a little annoyed and harried them by attacking their convoys and cutting off supplies.

Lake moved from Dig on the 29th of December and arrived before Bharatpur on the 3rd of January, 1805. The siege was commenced in right earnest and the batteries were opened against the town on the 7th. On the 9th, a breach in the wall of the town was reported practicable ; and storming the town was determined upon. But so far all their efforts met with no success. On the 10th January, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :

"I have the honour to inform Your Lordship, that in consequence of the breach in the wall of the town being reported practicable, I determined on storming the place yesterday evening. I chose this time, in order to prevent the enemy from stockading the breach during the night which had hitherto been the case.

"I am sorry to add, that obstacles of an insurmountable nature were opposed to the storming party, on their arrival at the breach ; the water in the ditch was exceedingly deep ; this difficulty however was speedily surmounted, and the party gained the foot of the breach ; but though every exertion was made by both officers and men, the breach was so imperfect, that every effort to gain the top proved fruitless, and the column, after making several attempts with heavy loss, was obliged to retire, which they did in excellent order, to our battery."

This attempt to capture Bharatpur by force was unsuccessful ; but the Commander-in-Chief fed the mind of the Governor-General with hopes which were never to be realized.

A second attempt was again made, but this too, was as unsuccessful as the first.

This failure for the second time greatly depressed the Commander-in-Chief. The loss in men and want of military stores and provisions delayed the commencement of renewed operations, till the beginning of February, when the batteries were opened upon the wall, and on the 20th of the same month, the breach being supposed to be practicable, an attempt for the third time to carry the place by assault was made under the directions of the Commander-in-Chief. Like the first two attempts, this one, too, was unsuccessful. But this failure was largely due to the British soldiers. The manner in which they behaved themselves was simply scandalous and showed how demoralized they had become by their repeated failures. Had it not been for the pluck and courage of the Indian Sepoys, it is not improbable that the Commander-in-Chief would have been obliged to raise the siege and retire into the Company's territories. The cowardly and insubordinate manner in which the British soldiers behaved themselves in contrast with the plucky and couragous conduct of the Indian troops has been thus described by a British writer:

"These two failures having enforced the necessity of more regular proceedings, approaches were begun in a different position, and carried to the edge of the ditch, supplies of stores and artillery were brought from Agra and other depots; and more powerful batteries, though still much too weak for the propose, opened against part of the wall where the curtain was of less width than usual, and was effectually covered by a bastion at either extremity. On the morning of the day appointed for the storm, the garrison, whose courage had been elevated to the highest pitch by the slow progress of the siege, . . . , made a desperate sally upon the head of the trenches, gained possession of them for a time, and were repulsed only after they had killed the officer of His Majesty's 75th, commanding the advance, and many of the men. They gained and retained possession also of a trench in advance of the lines, from which it was proposed to dislodge them; and follow them closly into the breach. *The Europeans, however, of His Majesty's 75th and 76th who were at the head of the column, refused to advance. . . . The entreaties and expostulations of their officers failing to produce any effect, two regiments of Native Infantry, the 12th and 15th, were summoned to the front, and gallantly advanced to the storm.*"

In the sentences italicized in the above extract, the very cowardly nature of the English soldiers is brought out in bold relief when compared with the courage and pluck of the Indian Sepoys. It was with the help of these Sepoys that the Bharatpur garrison, which had made a desperate sally upon the head of the trenches, were repulsed. But of course these Sepoys could not retrieve the disaster of the day or gain possession of Bharatpur by assault as their British leaders were in the some predicament as their comrades. So necessarily the third attempt to carry the place by assault proved a failure like the two previous ones. But for the courage and pluck of the Sepoys by whom the Bharatpur garrison were repulsed, there is no doubt that the English in India would have fared very badly and their power altogether sapped. Had not the Bharatpur garrison been repulsed it is probable they would have made short work of the British soldiers who had been seized with panic and were insubordinate in refusing to advance. It was the much abused Indian Sepoys who preserved the English from utter ruin.

Although the third attempt of the Commander-in-Chief to capture Bharatpur was a

* H. H. Wilson's Note to his edition of Mill's *History of India,* Vol. vi, p. 426.

huge failure, he did not cease from sending clap-trap despatches to the Marquess Wellesley designed to minister to the war-fever and to persuade that all was well when it was not well. That these despatches are not reliable, and that if any one were to attempt to base his history on those official documents, such an attempt would be a failure, would be evident from the fact that the cowardly manner in which the British soldiers behaved, and the courage and pluck which Indian Sepoys exhibited in repulsing the Bharatpur garrison find no place in the despatches of Lake to the Governor-General or of the letter to the Secret Committee of the East India Company. Even Mill is obliged to write:

"One of the most remarkable perhaps, of all the events in the history of the British nation in India, is the difficulty, found by this victorious army, of subduing the capital of a petty Raja of Hindustan. The circumstances have not been sufficiently disclosed, for, on the subject of these unsucecssful attacks, the reports of the Commander-in-Chief are laconic. As general causes, he chiefly alleges the extent of the place, the number of its defenders, the strength of its works, and, lastly, the incapacity of his engineers: as if a Commandar-in-Chief were fit for his office who is not himself an engineer."

But it is not easy for any English writer to lay his finger on the real causes of the failure of the force under the command of General Lake in subduing Bharatpur. All the victories which the Britishers had so far attained in India, were gained by means of treachery and fraud and not by means of the sword or fair fight alone. Fortunately, the Raja of Bharatpur and Holkar had not at this time any British officer of soldier in their employ. And so the English found it difficult to corrupt and demoralize the defenders of Bharatpur. Among the defenders there were as yet no traitors.

General Lake's force had been augmented by the arrival of the army of Guzerat. This division was, as said before, under the command of Colonel Murray, who, after capturing all the possessions of Holkar in the Central India, returned to Guzerat, handing over the command to Major-General Jones. This army arrived at Bharatpore on the 12th February and took part in the third unsuccessful assault on Bharatpore and other succeeding operations.

Holkar's cavalry, as said before, was outside the towns of Bharatpur. It had been joined also by the light horse under Amir Khan. This cavalry was giving no end of trouble to the English by cutting off their supplies and attacking convoys. Had Amir Khan thrown his heart and soul into harassing the British camp and eolumn and co-operated heartily with Holkar in the struggle, there can be no doubt that the fate of the British would have been for ever sealed in India. But Amir Khan did everything in a very perfunctory and half-hearted manner. It has already been hinted at before, that the English were in secret understanding with Amir Khan, though he was not as yet completely bought off. From Amir Khan's Memoirs, it appears that the Raja of Bharatpore advised him to act in concert with Holkar. The Raja is reported to have said

"as both Sirdars could not act well together in the same field, it would be better that one

should remain at Bhurtpore while the other headed an incursion into the enemy's territory, and carried the war thither." *

Accordingly, Amir Khan went upon this expedition. To pursue Amir Khan, Lake had detached the cavalry under General Smith, who did not find much difficulty in reducing the Afghan adventurers force. It seems to us that as Amir Khan was hunting with the hound and running with the hare, he played into the hands of the English by suffering the destruction of the men who were principally the remnants of Holkar's cavalry. Amir Khan returned to Bharatpur, and rejoined Holkar on the 20th March, 1805. General Smith also returning three day's afterwards (*i. e.*, on the 23rd March), rejoined Lake.

When the news of the third unsuccessful attempt in subduing Bharatpur reached the Governor-General, he seems to have been much depressed and concerned at the failure. On the 5th March he forwarded to Lake (who in the meanwhile had been raised to the peerage and henceforth known as Lord Lake) notes of instructions to terminate the war as soon as possible. Before dealing with these Notes, on which the opinions of the Commander-in-Chief were invited, it is necessary to refer to the letter, which the Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lake on the 9th March, 1805. In that letter the Governor-General wrote :

"In reading over my private communication, to Your Lordship, I fear that you may be impressed with an opinion that I feel too strong a desire for the early termination of the war, even on any terms. . . . I request Your Lordship not to attempt to renew the siege without full and ample means for its prosecution ; not to attempt any assault while the least doubt exists of success. *I fear that we have despised the place and enemy so much as to render both formidable.*

"The resumption of the siege of Bhurtpore previously to the pursuit of Holkar is also a point which I must seriously recommend to your attention. Unless the reduction of the place be absolutely necessary previously to that pursuit, or essential to our honour, I wish Your Lordship to consider whether the risk of another failure, and the consequent loss (to say no more), ought to be hazarded. . . . The health of the troops must also be most seriously and tenderly considered."

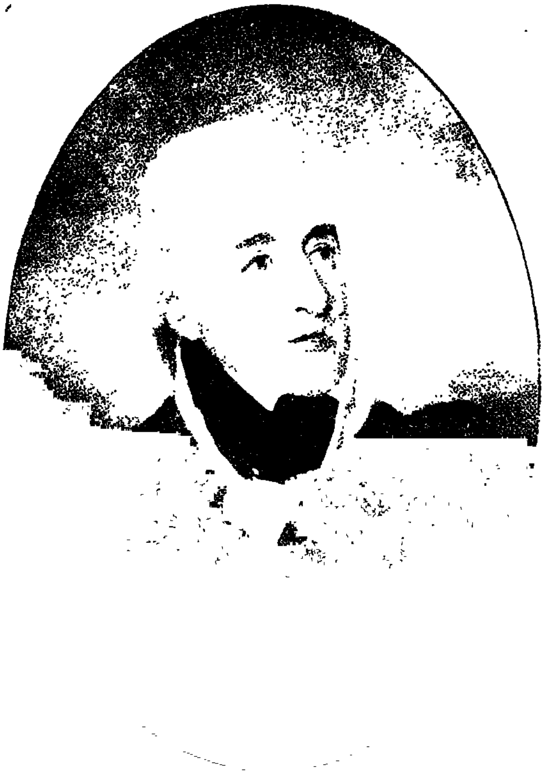
In plain language, then, the Governor-General had become quite tried of the war and desired for peace, almost on any terms. This will also be evident from the Notes to which reference will be presently made.

The only silver lining to the dark cloud in which the political horizon of the English in India was enshrouded was the success of General Smith over Amir Khan. In his 'private' letter of 13th March, 1805, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lord Lake:

"This moment I have received an account of General Smith's highly meritorious conduct in *overtaking and defeating Ameer Khan at Ufzulghur.* I now trust that the effects of that incursion will prove favourable, and that the robber and assassin will meet his deserts. I conclude that General Smith will hunt the tiger tn the jungles into destruction."

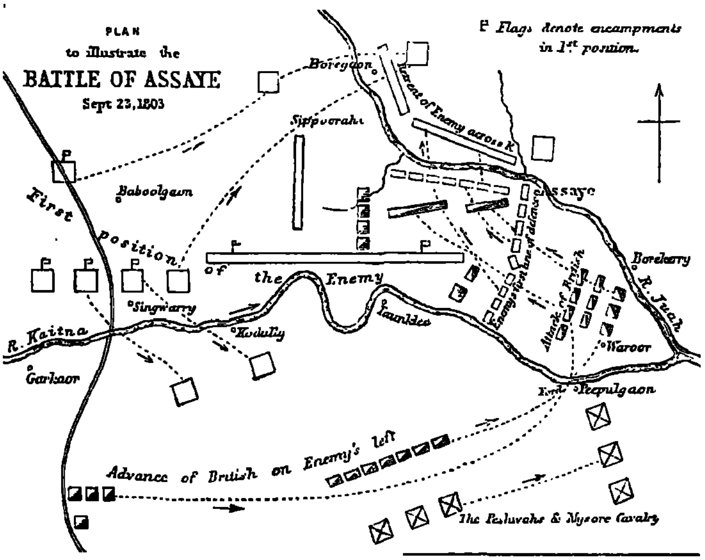
It is not understood why Smith did not pursue Amir Khan, but allowed him to rejoin Holkar.

* P. 250



Lord Lake

Raja Ranjit (Bharatpur)



Battle of Assaye

The Governor-General's "Notes" under date the 5th March, 1805, throw much light on the methods employed by the English in getting out of the Bharatpur imbroglio. These "Notes" were addressed to Lake, who was invited to give his opinions thereon. The intrigues which had been set afoot can be easily seen through these "Notes." Some of the notes together with the opinions of Lake on them are given below. The Marquess Wellesley wrote:

"While the Commander-in-Chief is preparing for the siege of Bhurtpore, or actually engaged in it, might it not be advisable to endeavour to detach Runjeet Sing from Holkar? Although Bhurtpore has not fallen, Runjeet Sing is certainly much reduced and alarmed, and Holkar would be hopeless if abandoned by Runjeet Sing."

To this note, Lake replied as follows:

"Every endeavour is making, and will be made to detach Runjeet Sing from Holkar. Runjeet Singh is certainly much reduced in money and greatly alarmed. Holkar and his followers would have little hope if abandoned by Runjeet Sing."

This shows how intrigues had been set afoot to detach the Raja of Bharatpur from Holkar.

Another "Note" of the Governor-General runs as follows:

"Might it not be stated to Runjeet Sing that, although his fate has been delayed, he must know it to be inevitable, that a few weeks more must destroy him altogether; that his only certainty of escape is to throw himself upon the clemency of the British Government, and renounce Holkar altogether, in which case he will be admitted to pardom, and restored to his possessions?"

This shows climbing down on the part of the Governor-General. It will be remembered that when he finally approved of the war with the Raja of Bharatpur, he wrote to Lake, in his 'secret and official' letter dated 20th December, 1804, that

"the entire reduction of the power and resources of the Raja of Bharatpur however, is now become indispensably necessary, and I accordingly authorize and direct your Excellency to adopt immediate arrangements for the attainment of that desirable object and for the annexation to the British power, in such manner as your Excellency may deem most consistent with the public interests, of all the forts, territories, and possessions belonging to the Raja of Bharatpur."

Lake had also advocated the spoliation of all the possessions of the Raja of Bharatpur. In his 'private' letter to the Marquess Wellesley dated Muttra, 30th November, 1804, he wrote:

"He (the Raja of Bharatpur) certainly deserves no favor from our Government, as his conduct has been the most unprovoked and violent that ever was heard of."

But now Lake had also to climb down. He was now trying his best to bring about reconciliation with the Raja of Bharatpur by means of sweet and specious promises as the following observation of his on the Governor-General's "Note" shows. In reply to the Marquess Wellesley's "Note" he wrote:

"Every means has been attempted to show Runjeet Sing how fruitless any attempts of his to oppose the British Government must prove.

"A correspondence is now going on between me and Runjeet Sing, which I am in hopes will lead to an accommodation sufficiently favorable to the British Government, and prevent any future union of interests between that Chief and Jeswunt Rao Holkar."

This was really a climb down for Lake and shows how busily engaged he was in carrying on intrigues to detach the Raja from Holkar.

The Marquess Wellesley, it would seem, was in favor of raising the siege of Bharatpur, for one of his 'Notes' ran as follows :

"The two great objects now to be accomplished, are the expulsion of Holkar and the protection of our own territories; the reduction of Runjeet Sing, or of Bharatpur, is only important as connected with those objects."

On this 'Note,' Lake observed :

"Either an amicacle accommodation with Runjeet Sing, or the reduction of Bharatpur will enable me to expel Holkar and Ameer Khan, but their expulsion previously will not be possible."

Amir Khan was the man with whom the Britishers had been carrying on intrigues since a long time past. That Afghan adventurer was, as has been said so often before, hunting with the hound and running with the hare. While professing to be a partizan of Holkar, he did not consider it inconsistent with his sense of honor to listen to the overtures of the British. It was their interest to buy over Amir Khan. So the Governor-General wrote in a "Note":

Mr. Seton and General Smith should be authorized to offer a settlement of land to such of Ameer Khan's followers as would quit him. Even Ameer Khan himself might be offered a jagheer, if he will quit Holkar's cause, submit to the British Government, and come into General Smith's camp within a stated period of time."

To this 'Note,' Lake replied as follows:

"A settlement in lands should certainly be offered to Ameer Khan's followers.

"Ameer Khad is most exorbitant in his demands. He asks thirty-three lacs of rupees in the first instance, and a jagheer for 10,000 horse. This was his proposal in Rohilcund, and I doubt much if he would now be more moderate, as his battalions and guns have joined Scindhia."

From the above, the manner in which the Britishers were intriguing with Amir Khan and his followers is quite evident. It may also be safely presumed that Amir Khan betrayed Holkar in order to curry favor with the English and also in the hope of some day gaining his object from them, namely, thirty-three lacs of rupees in cash and a jagir for 10,000 horse. When we take into consideration the critical position in which the English were placed at this time in India, we are inclined to believe that Amir Khan was given to understand by them that his demand would be complied with, and it was thus that he played false to Holkar. It also appears to us that General Smith did not vanquish and defeat Amir Khan but prevailed on his followers to desert their Afghan leader by holding out to them the temptation of a settlement of land and other pecuniary gains.

After the three unsuccessful attempts at subduing Bharatpur, the Britishers were not very anxious to renew offensive operations against it. As said before, they were trying to negotiate with the Raja of Bharatpur for peace. Although the Raja had the satisfaction of seeing the thorough humiliation of the English, it was necessary for him to attend to his own safety. The Raja did not lose his penetration in this perplexed state of affairs; conjecturing that Amir Khan had been playing false with Holkar, and despairing of any assistance from Sindhia or any

other prince in India, he found it necessary not to reject the terms which were offered to him.

We have already narrated on a previous page, how the English were bullying the Raja of Nagpur on the mere suspicion that he intended to join Holkar or render assistance to him. Although Sindhia had been promised the territories which would be conquered from Holkar, yet he discovered how he had been duped, and was therefore anxious to sever the alliance he had entered into with the English. When the news of their repeated failure in subduing Bharatpur reached Sindhia there is no doubt that he intended to join Holkar and thus try to regain some of his lost possessions. We have already stated the manner in which he narrated his grievances in a letter he wrote to the Governor-General, extracts from which have already been given on a previous page. If there was ever any favorable opportunity for Sindhia to recover his lost possessions, it was now when nothing but gloom surrounded the English in India. Why Sindhia did not take advantage of the golden opportunity which presented itself to him has remained an enigma to many. His contingent under Bapu Sindhia and Sadhasheorao Bhow had joined Holkar. And could he but have come and joined Holkar, it would have been very hard, if not impossible, for the English to extricate themselves from the critical position they were in. The inability of Sindhia to join Holkar seems to us to have been due to the treachery of his Christian officers, At this time, of which we are writing, John Baptiste Filose was the virtual Commander-in-Chief of Sindhia's army. He was a Christian half-caste. It is probable that he was in intrigue with the English and thus prevented Sindhia from joining Holkar. Our conjecture derives support from the fact that Sindhia about this time placed this man under arrest, because he suspected his loyalty and good faith. Regarding this arrest, the grandson of John Baptiste Filose thus wrote in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for April, 1889:

"When Colonel Filose had thus distinguished himself by so many successful undertakings, probably standing higher in Scindhia's favor than any of the other foreign officers, jealousy began to appear in various quarters. The Maharaja Holkar had employed a few Europeans, but he had never placed full confidence in them. He now reminded Scindhia, in one of their private interviews, that he was on bad terms with the English, and that, under the circumstances, it was unsafe to place Colonel Filose in such a high position. For should these foreign officers join the English, as they probably would, Scindhia would find it impossible to defend himself. He therefore recommended that on some excuse or other Filose should be placed under arrest."

Now, we do not understand the solicitude of Holkar to advise Sindhia to place John Baptiste under arrest, had he not been smarting under the wrongs and injuries he suffered at the hands of the British which he knew he would not have done had Sindhia joined him. It is impossible to state all that transpired in the private interviews between Holkar and Sindhia. But Sindhia would not have taken such a step as that of placing Filose under arrest, had he not been convinced by Holkar's reasonings and arguments that his inability to repair to Bharatpur in time and join Holkar was due to the treachery of John Baptiste Filose. From the words of Lake in his letter to the Governor-General, dated Agra 22nd September, 1804, already mentioned on a

previous page, it should also be presumed that Baptiste was carrying on intrigues with the English.

This was the position then of the Raja of Bharatpur. He had helped the destitute Holkar when the affairs of the latter were at their lowest ebb. With his characteristic ideal of oriental hospitality, he had given refuge to Holkar, knowing fully well the risk he was running and the punishment that would have been inflicted on him by the vindictive English if they succeeded in subduing his captial. But when he saw that he had single-handed to fight with the odds opposed against him and when he did not expect any assistance from any quarter and when he discovered that Amir Khan was not in hearty co-operation with Holkar the instinct of self-preservation dictated him to lend a favorable ear to the overtures made to him by the English. Resistance against them under the circumstances we have alluded to was hopeless. Hence, little fault should be found with him for his willingness to treat with them. It should also be remembered that it was not he who sued for peace with them, but it was they who opened the negotiations for peace with him. To his credit it should also be prominently mentioned that surrender of Holkar into the hands of the English did not enter into the Treaty of Peace. The English were anxious to get possession of the person of Holkar. To them the reduction of the power of the Raja of Bharatpur was not such a desirable object as the capture of Holkar. In his despatches and notes of instructions to General Lake, the Governor-General has over and over again reminded him of the necessity of pursuing Holkar to extremity. In :his "Notes" of the 5th March, 1805, it is stated :

"The two great objects now to be accomplished, are the expulsion of Holkar and the protection of our own territories : the reduction of Runjeet Sing, or of Bharatpur, is only important as connected with those objects."

Again in his "Notes" of the 10th March, the Governor-General wrote :

"It would certainly be highly advantageous, if practicable, to drive off Holkar altogether, and to pursue him to extremity even during the siege.

* * * *

"If the siege of Bharatpur should not be resumed, I hope that an immediate attack will be made upon Holkar, and that he will be vigorously pursued to extremity, by a properly equipped force.

* * * *

"The great object therefore even with respect to Scindhia is the reduction of Holkar, . . . "

The English having been so anxious for the reduction of Holkar, it is not taxing one's intelligence too much to suppose that the Commander-in-Chief must have held up temptations and allurements and made sweet and specious promises to the Raja of Bharatpur to induce him to surrender Holkar into his hands. It should be remembered that the person of Holkar was entirely at the mercy of the Raja of Bharatpur. Lake must have employed every conceivable means to get possession of the person of Holkar. It is, therefore, highly creditable to the Raja, that he did not curry favour with the English by surrendering the person of Holkar into their hands, as did his name-sake of the Punjab, not very many months afterwards.

The siege of Bharatpur was now to be at an end. The negotiations which the Commander-in-Chief had opened with the Raja terminated in the Treaty of Peace drawn up in the beginning of April, 1805. Holkar was allowed to depart from Bharatpur towards the end of March, 1805. He ultimately fled towards the Panjab, where he thought that he would find an asylum in the country of the Sikhs. But he discovered his mistake not before long and he was pursued by the Commander-in-Chief.

On the 10th April, 1805, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley as follows:

"I take the very earliest opportunity of informing you that peace is established between the British Government and Runjeet Sing. I trust the terms may be deemed proper by your Lordship. . . .

"Holkar is reduced in the extreme : he has no troops. at least so few that they can do no more than guard his person, even those are starving, and he has not a rupee to give them. They have of late had a most wearisome life, and will not remain with him.

"I feel relieved by this negotiation, although I have reason to think we should soon have been in possession of the town, I fear our troops must have suffered exceedingly from the heat. . . .

"I hope and trust, this act of mine will meet your approbation ; I felt the necessity of getting rid of this siege, that we might be ready for Scindhia, who will, I should imagine, give up his hostile intentions."

To show to the world that the English had punished the Raja for his so-called treachery to them, it was laid down on paper that he should be made to pay twenty lacs of rupees, and be deprived of Dig and the country granted to him the previous year. Of the fine of twenty lacs imposed on him, the Raja paid only three lacs to Lake. It seems to us that this payment of three lacs by the Raja was a sort of make-believe, for the Raja was not then in a position to pay anything to the English. The fortress of Dig was restored to the Raja not very long afterwards, and so he did not lose anything by defying their authority and inflicting upon them the humiliation and disgrace of their repeated failures in subduing Bharatpur.

Holkar should be looked upon as the saviour of India at this critical juncture. On a previous occasion we described him as lacking in statesmanship. It is no doubt true that he played into the hands of the English and helped them in placing the yoke of the subsidiary alliance on the neck of the Peshwa and betrayed the Maratha Confederates into the war. He did not join the Maratha Confederates and thus his conduct was most reprehensible. But when he discovered that the Britishers had made him their cat's-paw in gaining their selfish ends and when he found how he had been duped by them, he prepared for war with them. He had benefited from the experience of Sindhia, and so, before going to war with them, he very properly got rid of the foreign officers he had in his employ by executing them. The step of getting rid of the foreign servants saved him from the disgrace and disasters which had befallen Sindhia in his war with the English. It should be remembered that had Holkar not inflicted defeats on them, and thus arrested their career of successful intrigues and conspiracies, it is difficult to estimate to what extremity the country would have been then brought. The news of the disasters which had befallen the English in their unjust war with Holkar made such an impression on the minds of the people of England that they came to realize that their affairs in India were not safe in the hands of the then

Governor-General. It will be remembered that the Marquess Wellesley had intimated his intention of resigning the service of the Company and of embarking for England in the month of January, 1803. But the confusion and disorder which he succeeded in creating in the Maratha Polity by his machinations, made him change his mind and ask the permission of the Court of Directors to stay on in India and to improve the interests of the British in India. He tried to bring about the ruin of the Maratha States, opened campaigns of intrigues and conspiracies against them, and declared unjust and unrighteous war on them and deprived them of their fertile territories and provinces.

Success like charity covers many sins. When this Governor-General was able to show to his co-religionists and compatriots in England the extension of their power in India by the annexation of fertile provinces, they forgot his faults and allowed him to stay on in India for almost an indefinite period and gave him a free hand in carrying out his policy.

Had Jaswunt Rao been subdued, not only would his dominion have been annexed by the British, but the map of India from the Himalaya to the Cape Comorin would have been dyed red by the Marquess Wellesley. It is true that Sindhia had been promised a portion of the territory conquered from Holkar. But as pointed out before, it would not have taken the English long to discover some pretext to deprive Sindhia of his new acquisitions. In fact when the fate of the English was trembling in the balance, they did not hesitate in charging Sindhia with treachery, and on the termination of the war with Holkar, they would have certainly declared hostilities with Sindhia. Possessing very short memories, and altogether devoid of gratitude, it is not to be surprised at, that the English would have deprived of their possessions those princes who had in any way rendered them assistance in their hour of trial and need. Witness the treatment they meted out to the Raja of Bharatpur. That prince was provoked to hostilities by the peremptory demands made on him by the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, who both conspired in advocating spoliation of the Raja's possessions. They forgot the assistance they had received from the Raja in the war with Sindhia.

Supposing then that the Raja of Bharatpur and Holkar had both been subdued by the English, is there any room for doubt that they would have gone to war with the other native princes of India and deprived them of their possessions and cherished rights and privileges ? On some pretext or other, the states and principalities of Rajputana and Central India would have been annexed. The Sikhs in the Panjab had not then risen into a Power of whom the English took any notice. The Panjab would have been transformed into a province of the East India Company.

If ever the acquisition of the whole of India by the English was an easy affair, it was after the break-up of the Maratha Confederacy and the destruction of the military resources and power of Sindhia and the Raja of Berar on the battle-fields of Assaye, Argaum and Laswari. Had not Holkar come in the way, the Marquess Wellesley would have accomplished what the Marquis Hastings and Lord Dalhousie even failed to do. The dream of Dalhousie to color the whole map of India red was

never realized. If circumstances were against Dalhousie's scheme being carried into execution, there was no difficulty in the path of the Marquess Wellesley, excepting the existence of Holkar, leading to the goal of annexation of all the States of Native India.

For these reasons, then, Holkar must be looked upon as the saviour of India. For although within a little over half-a-century the English rose to supreme power in India, their subsequent rise was altogether different from what it would have been had they come to possess it in the early years of the Nineteenth Century. The supremacy of the English in India in the time of the Marquess Wellesley would have been attended with consequences fatal to the very existence of Indians. The British would have looked upon India as a conquered country, and the Indians wonld not have been treated any better than the aborigines of other countries which the British have colonized. When the English rose to supreme power in India under Dalhousie the line of policy on which India was to be governed was clearly although very faintly drawn by them. Fifty years of intercourse with the English had taught the natives of of India to know the character of the new comers, and they had also been initiated into the language, literature and science of the natives of England. Thus those who could penetrate and see through the designs of Dalhousie set in operation those forces which saved India from utter annihilation and brought her under the Crown and Parliament of England.

But the extension of the power of the English in India in the days of the Marquess Wellesley would not have been attended with those beneficial consequences which naturally followed half a century afterwards.

Success like charity, as said before, covers many sins. Had the English succeeded in their contest with Holkar, there is little doubt that, notwithstanding all his shortcomings, the Marquess Wellesley would have been granted an extension of several year's residence in India to carry out the policy which was so dear to the heart of Pitt, who was no Little Englander. The loss of America was to be made good, and, as already said before, Pitt commissioned the Marquess Wellesley to found an Empire for England in India. The successful resistance of Holkar, then, against the extension of the power of the English in India should be looked upon as providential for the welfare of India. Looked at in this light, we can virtually share the belief with the Sepoys that Bharatpur was under the care of Krishna. Mr. Thornton in his *Gazetteer* of India tells us that

"in 1805, during the first siege, some of the native soldiers in the British service declared that they distinctly saw the town defended by that divinity, dressed in yellow garments and armed with his peculiar weapons, the bow, mace, conch and pipe."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE LAST DAYS OF THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY IN INDIA

After the raising of the siege of Bharatpur, the Marquess Wellesley's name is not connected with any other important political transaction in India, except his settlement of disputes with Sindhia. The nature of the disputes with Sindhia has already been alluded to ; that that Maratha Prince had had grievances, which were not imaginary, against the Company, cannot be denied. Sindhia had threatened the English with a renewal of the war. With that object in view, he had moved out of Burhanpur and and was on his march towards Bharatpur. He had placed under arrest Mr. Jenkins, the British resident, attached to his Court. This was against every received principle of the Law of Nations. But then that was the only way in which Sindhia could expect to draw the attention of the English to his wrongs and make them either declare hostilities against him or redress his grievances and wrongs. And subsequent events proved that he was not mistaken.

When it became known to the English that Sindhia was on his way to Bharatpur they remonstrated with him. Of course as said before, Sindhia could not reach Bharatpur in time when the siege was progressing, owing principally to the treachery of John Baptiste Filose.

It is the second time that Dowlat Rao Sindhia could not prevent the English from succeeding in gaining their ends. It will be remembered that Dowlut Rao Sindhia could not go to Puna in time to prevent the Peshwa from making the alliance with the British. Again, during the siege of Bharatpur, he was unable to march on to that place and thus annihilate the latter. The words "Too Late" were ever written on all his expeditions undertaken with the object of frustrating the attempts of the British to obtain supremacy in India.

Sindhia finding himself helpless and unable to render any material assistance to either the Raja of Bharatpur or Holkar during the siege, adopted a conciliatory tone in replying to the remonstrances of the British Government of India. He was at this time not far from the river Chambal and he declared that he was unable to proceed to settle his own country from the state of his finances, and that his object in marching towards Bharatpur was to mediate a peace. He had also sent on a part of his cavalry and Pindaris towards Bharatpur. But as said before, it was "too late", as the Raja had concluded the treaty with the English.

Sindhia was promised pecuniary assistance provided he would return and employ himself in taking possession of Holkar's unoccupied districts in Malwa and apologise for his conduct in detaining and placing under arrest the British resident at his Court. Sindhia acquiesced and retired eight miles towards Sabbalgarh. Holkar and Amir Khan after leaving Bharatpur came and joined Sindhia at this place. This open junction of Holkar and Sindhia alarmed the English. But Sindhia tried to justify himself by

explaining that Holkar had intended to plunder the territories then in the possession of the Britishers but at his request abandoned that design, and consented to his mediation for the attainment of peace ; to whom this explanation did not appear satisfactory. Lake made preparations to attack Sindhia and Holkar. But the latter at first repaired to Kota, and afterwards moved towards Ajmere. It was this move of Sindhia and Holkar which prevented Lake from pursuing and fighting them. In his letter marked "Private" and dated April 25, 1805, Lake wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :

"I have been honored with all your notes and directions respecting Dowlut Rao Scindhia which your Lordship may rest assured shall be carried into effect in the most direct and speedy manner possible. My only fear is, that on my approach, he with his confederates will retire, and that it will be impossible for me to follow him ; the country through which he will pass to the Deccan, being at this season so extremely hot, and almost entirely without water.... The only difficulty is, that he and his confederates are so alarmed and weary that they never rest at night. . . . There is no vile act these people are not equal to ; that inhuman monster Holkar's chief delight is in butchering all Europeans, and by all accounts Serjie Rao Ghautka's disposition towards us is precisely the same. * "

On the receipt of this letter and on hearing the news of Sindhia's retirement the Marquess Wellesley directed Lake not to pursue Sindhia or Holkar. But the English were not anxious to make peace or settle differences with Sindhia and Holkar ; they were only trying to gain time, and making preparations with the intention of renewing the war on the outbreak of the rainy season.

Marquess Wellesley advised Lake to canton the troops in such a manner as would be easily available for renewing the war with Sindhia and Holkar, if necessary.

There is very little doubt that had the Marquess Wellesley remained in India till August, 1805, he would have renewed the war with Sindhia and also with Holkar in order to wipe out the disgrace attendant on the unsuccessful siege of Bharatpur. Lake was also doing everything to minister to the war-fever. He had to retrieve his character as a general, and therefore he was so anxious to see the renewal of the war.

But, fortunately, the Marquess Wellesley had to leave India for good before the beginning of August, 1805. In a way, he was recalled; for his wars with the Marathas had swollen the debt of the East India Company to such an extent that the Directors were alarmed at his proceedings. The natives of England never spent a single farthing out of their pockets in establishing their power in India. They came to India in the capacity of humble traders. They, as a nation of shop-keepers, wanted to make money by means fair or foul. But the wars in which the Marquess Wellesley involved the Company were not calculated to enrich them, nay, on the contrary they found that the East India trade was not a paying concern and they were not receiving a handsome dividend. Consequently, a hue and cry was raised in England against the Marquess Wellesley's policy and he was desired to return from India.* The Court of Directors severely and adversely criticized the Indian policy of the Governor-General.

* How unpopular the Marquess Wellesley's war on Holkar was in England can be easily judged from the letter of the Marquis Cornwalis to Lieut.-General Ross dated Culford, Oct. 14, 1804. He

Not waiting for an explanation from the Marquess Wellesley regarding his doings in India, the Court of Directors nominated the Marquess Cornwallis as Governor-General and sent him out to India.

At that time the English wanted peace at any cost in India. Lord Cornwallis was supposed to be a man who loved peace more than anything else. But that was, no doubt, a mistake. When the news of the successful campaigns of Generals Wellesley and Lake against the Marathas reached Eagland, Cornwallis wrote a letter of congratulation to the Marquess Wellesley, the letter marked 'Private' and dated Burlington Street, April 30th, 1804, which was received by the latter on the 27th September, 1804. In it he wrote :

"I can with truth assure you that I have felt much anxiety during the course of your Maratha warfare, being well aware of the difficulties against which you had to contend, and I now sincerely congratulate you on your brilliant successes.

"The important and glorious achievements of my friends, General Lake and Wellesley, have afforded me the most sincere satisfaction.

"As I am now growing old, and perhaps out of fashion, it is not likely that I should again be selected for any active situation.

"My wishes, however, continue to be as warm as they ever were for the honour and welfare of my country ; and I earnestly hope that, in every part of the globe, its interests will be promoted by as able statesmen, and its armies conducted by as meritorious generals, as those who have of late been entrusted with the preservation of our Asiatic Empire."

The man who could express the sentiments quoted above and congratulate the author of the most unjust and unjustifiable war on the Marathas, can hardly be called a lover of peace. Cornwallis was as great a follower of Pitt as was the Marquess Wellesley ; and Pitt was no Little Englander. It seems to us that Cornwallis was sent out for the second time to India to carry out the policy of Pitt in extending the

wrote :—"If your account of Lord Wellesley's conduct did not come from so good authority, I should scarcely believe it possible that after having escaped the extreme hazards to which our interests in India were at various times exposed during the late contests with the Marathas, he should so soon, not only wantonly, but, according to Charles Grant's statement, criminally involve himself in all the difficulties of another war against an able and powerful Chief of that nation (*i. e.*, Holkar). I should conceive that the Ministers would be inclined to bring him away, although they might be disposed to let him down easy."

Again, on the 6th Dec. 1804, the Marquis Cornwallis wrote to Lieut.-General Ross :—"Lord Castlereagh came here yesterday early from Lord Paget's. . . . He told me that Mr. Pitt had entered thoroughly into the business, and, although he was disposed to show Lord Wellesley all the attention which the circumtances could admit, he was decidedly of opinion that he had acted most imprudently and illegally, and that he could not be suffered to remain in the Government."

On the next day, that is, 7th Dec., 1804, the Marquis Cornwallis wrote to Leiut.-General Ross :—

"Amongst other charges, Lord Wellesley is attacked on account of the order for the commencement of hostilities against Holkar being signed only by himself, without any notification of its being done with the concurrence of his council. Lord Castlereagh asked me in what cases the Governor-General's signature alone was used ; I said that I could not at this distance of time charge my memory exactly, but that I thought it was in the correspondence with the princes of the country, and with our Residents at their Courts, but that they were either read in Council or circulated to the Members."

power of the British in India. The reputation which Cornwallis enjoyed as a peace-loving man blinded the natives of England from seeing the man in his true colors. The only difference between Cornwallis and the Marquess Wellesley was that the latter wanted to extend the power of England in India as speedily as possible and he was running at a speed which did not commend itself to the more thoughtful followers of Pitt.

The Marquess Cornwallis landed at Madras on the 18th July, 1805. On the following day, he wrote to the Marquess Wellesley :

"I arrived last night at this anchorage, when I learned that your Lordship is still in Bengal. I have therefore requested the Admiral to despatch an express vessel, to inform you that it is my intention to proceed in three or four days to Calcutta, in order that my arrival might be as little inconvenient to your Lordship as possible."

Cornwallis arrived in Calcutta on the 30th July and took over the charge of the Government of India the same day. The Marquess Wellesley embarked in His Majesty's ship the *Howe* on the 15th of August and left India for good.

Thus left the shores of India that ruler who heaped nothing but miseries on this country and whose name is not associated with any act for which the natives of India would cherish his memory with gratitude. He was the greatest follower of Machiavelli whom England ever sent out to India. After his return to England, an attempt was made in the House of Commons at his impeachment, but with what result has already been mentioned in some of the previous chapters.

The accusers of Lord Wellesley would not have moved their little fingers against him had not his administration of India deprived their country of the expected remittance home of eight millions pounds sterling. In his speech in the House of Commons on Feb. 25, 1806, relating to the affairs of India, Mr. Paul said :

"By the act of 1793, after the payment of the military and civil establishment, the act enjoins that a sum not less than one million of pounds sterling shall be applied for commercial purposes, and remitted to Great Britain, to form a part of its national wealth. Since 1798, no sum whatever has been applied to commercial purposes, and the law has been violated in this single instance to a sum exceeding 8 millions. To this extent, and to this amount has this commercial nation been deprived of such an impórt from our colonies, which the law ordered and enjoined."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LORD CORNWALLIS'S SECOND INDIAN ADMINISTRATION.

(July to October, 1805)

Cornwallis arrived in Madras on the 19th of July and from there proceeded on his voyage to Bengal on the 23rd and arrived in Calcutta on July 29th and was sworn in on the following day. He found the affairs of the Company disorganised and the Treasury empty. The critical situation of the political affairs in India was thus described by him in his letter dated August 1st, 1805, to the Secret Committee:

Finding to my great concern that we are still at war with Holkar, and that we can hardly be said to be at peace with Scindhia, I have determined to proceed immediately to the upper provinces, that I may be at hand to avail myself of the interval which the present rainy season must occasion in the military operations, to endeavour, if it can be done without a sacrifice of our honour, to terminate by negotiation a contest in which the most brilliant success can afford us no solid benefit and which, if it should continue, must involve us in pecuniary difficulties, which we should hardly be able to surmount."

On the same day, he wrote to Lord Castlereagh:

"I entertain scarcely any hope that it will be in my power to come to an amicable accommodation with Scindhia, who still keeps the assistant of our Residency under restraint, as I understand that Lord Wellesley has guaranteed to the Rana of Gohud the supremacy which Scindhia claims over Gohud and the fortress of Gwalior.

"These possessions are too remote in my opinion to make it desirable for us to have anything to do with them, . . .

"My statements of our poverty are by no means overcharged, notwithstanding the former violent transactions in Oudh. Lord Wellesley has borrowed 20 lacs of the vizier, and has written to press him for 10 more. Our credit has, I believe, been tried to the utmost at Benares and other places."

Cornwallis left Calcutta on the 8th August and proceeded by the river to the Upper Provincess, with the intention of bringing about peace with the Maratha princess. It was the pecuniary difficulties which the British government had to experience at this time which compelled them to sue for peace.

Owing to the low state of finances, it is not surprising that Cornwallis tried to upset the political transactions of his predecessor. The Marques Wellesley was congratulated on the success which had attended his intrigues in gaining possession of the person of Shah Alam. But regarding this possession Cornwallis thus wrote to Malcolm on the 14th August, 1805:—

"I consider our possession of the person of Shah Allum and the town of Delhi as events truly unfortunate; and unless I should be able to persuade His Majesty to move further to the eastward, we can only secure him from the danger of being carried off, by the maintenance of a large army in the field, which will be an expense that our funds cannot bear. I deprecate the efforts of the almost universal frenzy, which has seized even some of the heads which I thought the soundest in the country, for conquest and victory, as opposite to the interests, as it is to the laws, of our country."

In his letter to Lake, dated Sept. 19th 1805, Cornwallis unfolded his plan of terminating disputes, and bringing about peace with the Maratha States of India. The letter is a long one, but it is so important, that the following extracts from it are given, as they express his views as to what he would have done had he lived a few months more. He wrote:

"The first and most important object of my attention is a satisfactory adjustment of all differences between the British Government and Dowlut Rao Scindhia, the principal obstacles to which appear to be—on the part of Scindhia, the release of the British Resident,—and on our part the cession to that chieftain of the fortress of Gwalior and the province of Gohud. I am aware of the disadvantages of immediately relinquishing, or even of compromising the demand which has been so repeatedly and so urgently made for the release of the British Resident; but I deem it proper to apprise your Lordship, that as a mere point of honour, I am disposed to compromise or even to abandon that demand, if it should ultimately prove to be the only obstacle to a satisfactory adjustment of affairs with Dowlut Rao Scindhia; and that I have hitherto been induced to support it by the apprehension that the motives of such a concession might be misinterpreted, and that it might lead to demands on the part of Scindhia, with which we could not comply without a sacrifice of dignity and interest incompatible with our security, and thereby render still more difficult of attainment the desirable object of a general pacification.

"With regard to the cession of Gwalior aud Gohud, in my decided opinion it is desirable to abandon our possession of the former, and our connexion with the latter, independently of any reference to a settlement of differences with Dowlut Rao Scindhia. . . .

"But however desirous I am to relinquish our possession of Gwalior and our connexion with Gohud, it is not my intention to accede to the unconditional surrender of those places. . . .

"In conformity to the preceding observations, the following is the general plan of arrangement which I am desirous of concluding with Dowlut Rao Scindhia:

"1st. To make over to Scindhia the possession of Gwalior and Gohud.

"2nd. To transfer to him, according to the provisions of the treaty of peace, the districts of Dholpoor, Baree, and Rajkerree; and to account to Scindhia for the collections from those districts since the peace.

* * * * * *

"3rd. The eventual restoration of the Jeynagar (Jeypoor) tribute, amounting, I understand, to the annual sum of 3 lacs of rupees.

"4th. To require from Scindhia his consent to the abrogation of the pensions, and to the resumption of the jaghires in the Duab, established by the treaty of peace.

"5th. To require from Scindhia the relinquishment of his claim to the arrears of the pension.

"6th. To demand a compensation for the public and private losses sustained by the plunder of the Residency.

"7th. To require Scindhia to make a provision for the Rana of Gohud to the extent of 2½ or 3 lacs of rupees per annum, which I should conceive to be amply sufficient.

* * * * * *

"With regard to Scindhia's own expectations of obtaining the grant of a portion of the territory conquered from Holkar by the British arms, Your Lordship is apprised of my inclination to restore the whole of those conquests to Holkar; Your Lordship, therefore, will not encourage any such expectation on the part of Scindhia.

* * * * * *

"From the tenor of the communications which I have received ralative to the views and disposition of Dowlut Rao Scindhia, there is every reason to believe that, if assured of the

cession of Gwalior and Gohud, he would be ready, not only to open a negotiation with the British Government for the adjustment of other points, but also to comply with the demand which has hitherto been declared to be an indispensable preliminary to any negotiation. . . . . . But being anxious to remove every obstacle to the proposed negotiation, and being resolved eventually to cede to Scindhia the possession of Gwalior and Gohud, I am not aware of any material objection to a candid declaration to Scindhia of my intentions in his favour, on the condition of his separation from Holkar, and his compliance with the demand for the release of the British Resident. . . . . . . I have deemed it advisable to combine with a declaration to that effect, a statement of the general principles of policy by which I am desirous of regulating the conduct of the British Government towards all the states of India. I am anxious to promulgate those principles, with a view to restore to the native states that confidence in the justice and moderation of the British Government, which past events have considerably impaired, and which appears to me to be essential to the security and tranquility of the Company's dominions. . . . . . .

"I now proceed to state to Your Lordship the plan which occurs to me for the disposal of the territory to the westward and southward of Delhi, without assigning any portion of it to Dowlut Rao Scindhia.

"The plan which I propose is to assign from it, jaghires to the several chiefs who have joined our cause, and for whom, with the irregular troops under their command, we are bound to provide, and to divide the remainder between the Rajas of Machery and Bhurtpore."

Such were the measures which Cornwallis contemplated to adopt towards the Maratha princes to settle the disputes with them. Had he lived a few months more, he would have been able to carry his views into execution.

Cornwallis, on his arrival in Calcutta, found that the army had not received any pay for several months. Writing to Castlereagh, on Aug. 9, 1805, he said:

"Lake's army, the pay of which amounts to about five lacs per month, is above five months in arrear. An army of irregulars, composed chiefly of deserters from the enemy, which with the approbation of Government, the general assembled by proclamation, and which costs about six lacs per month, is likewise somewhat in arrear."

If the troops were not immediately paid, he saw the danger of mutiny. Money had to be found, but how to do it ? In the letter to Lord Castlereagh referred to above, he wrote:

"How . . . . . . an army to be kept together with an empty treasury ? For the next two months we can expect nothing from the Collectors, and our only dependence is on the small supply of bullion sent from England."

Not expecting any aid from England, Cornwallis hit on the expediency of taking the bullion out of the ships at Madras which were destined for China, and also to reduce the number of troops. But what he intended to do would not perhaps have met with the approval of the home authorities, for in 1791, the Directors of the Company thought that such a procedure interfered with their pecuniary advantages as merchants. To convince those cold and calculating men in authority that such a step would not affect their pecuniary interests, he wrote to the Court of Directors on the 9th August, 1805 :

"You may be assured, that if the provision of your full investment from China could be affected in any degree by the consequences of the measure I have adopted, I should have preferred struggling through our difficulties under every possible disadvantage, rather than have subjected you to the disappointment which an insufficiency of funds in China might have occasioned ; but upon the fullest information I can obtain of the present state of the trade between the ports of

India and Canton, it is evident it will only require that permission should be given to your select committee there to extend the receipt of money for bills on Bengal to an amount equivalent to the treasure detained at Madras ; and such is the astonishing increase of the exports from India, especially in the articles of opium and cotton from this place, within these few years, that there can not be a doubt of the amplest supplies being tendered for their acceptance, the experience of last year having proved that offers of money exceeded the demands of your treasury there to the amount of near forty lacs of rupees, and as the exports of the present year are increased, even beyond those of the last, there can be as little doubt of an equal abundant resource being open this season, to the acceptance of your supercargoes at Canton."

He informed the Court of Directors that "this treasure has already had some effect in lowering the discount upon the paper."

Cornwallis and Lake had served in Ireland and helped to bring about the Union of that country with Great Britain.

He must have remembered the abominable deeds prepetrated by Lake in Ireland to provoke the natives of that country to rebellion. The task of pacifying Ireland fell to the lot of Cornwallis. In one of his letters, Cornwallis thus described the state of affairs in Ireland when he went there as Lord Lieutenant of the country. He wrote :

"On my arrival in this country I put a stop to the burning of houses and murder of the inhabitants by the yeomen, or any other persons who delighted in that amusement ; to the flogging for the purpose of extorting confession ; and to the free quarters, which comprehend universal rape and robbery throughout the whole country."

It should be remembered that Lake was then in Ireland as the Commander-in-Chief and all these atrocities by the yeomen were committed with his connivance, if not by his actual orders. Cornwallis, moreover, knew from his experience in Ireland that Lake was not a tactician, or a skilful general. He was, also, fully acquainted with the nature of Lake as a "truculent ruffian." It was not considered safe by him that Lake should continue to execise the powers which had been vested in him by Wellesley. Cornwallis came out in the dual capacity of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief. He made Lake understand that the latter was no longer the supreme head of the army in India or the sole arbiter of the fates of the princes in Hindustan with whom he made war. The first official letter which he penned in India the very day he was sworn in was addressed to Lake, to whom he wrote :

"I have this day taken upon me the office of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, and I lose no time in acquainting you with my intention of proceeding up the country in a very few days....... I should wish that you would not engage in any act of aggression, unless it might appear to be necessary in order to secure your own army from *serious* danger, until I can come to you, or you can have further communication with me."

This letter from Cornwallis came as a thunder-bolt from the blue to Lake, who only five days previously (*i.e.*, on 25th July) was told by the Governor-General in Council that .

"Great danger must inevitably be produced by our abstaining from the prosecution of hostilities at the earliest practicable period of time.

"In conformity to these sentiments, the Governor-General in Council now authorizes and directs your Excellency to be prepared to commence active operations against the confederated

forces as soon as the season will admit, and the Governor-General in Council requests that your Excellency will transmit with the least practicable delay a plan of operations for the eventual prosecution of hostilities in every quarter of Hindustan and the Deccan."

But Cornwallis's letter put an end to Lake's ambition of winning the laurels and glories of war. He was opposed to the policy of Cornwallis, because he had adopted the views of Wellesley. It was, therefore, natural for him to have remonstrances with the new Governor-General, who had, it seemed to him, usurped his appointment of Commander-in-Chief of India and so he thought his occupation was gone. To smooth the ruffled feelings of that "truculent ruffian," the aged Marquis wrote to him several conciliatory letters. But he firmly told him that he should obey his command. Writing to him on September 1, 1805, he said:

"Nothing could make me believe that you would be induced to deviate in the slightest degree from any of my views while acting under my command."

In another long letter, dated September 19, which occupies nearly nine printed pages of the Cornwallis Correspondence, the Governor-General gave his views to Lake on the political affairs of India.

But nothing that Cornwallis did or said seemed to pacify Lake, who intended to resign his command in India and return to England. The last letter which Cornwallis wrote while alive was the one addressed to Lake, dated 23rd September, 1805. He commenced the letter as follows:

"It would be difficult to describe to you the feelings of regret and concern that have been produced on my mind, by the receipt of Your Lordship's public and and private letters of the 13th instant . . . . . . especially after the full persuasion I had been impressed with, of the thorough cordiality with which you had contemplated my arrival in India in the stations of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief.

"Your Lordship well knows that I have never yet accepted a civil government to which the military authority was not also annexed. . . . . . .

"I wish, before you take any decisive steps in regard to a return to Europe, that you would as candidly and freely explain to me, my dear Lord, the ideas which you had formed of the powers and authority intended to be vested in you, ..."

There can be little doubt that the uncompromising attitude of Lake preyed on the mind of Cornwallis and hastened his death. He died at Ghazipur, where his remains were interred and over which a handsome mausoleum has been erected by public subscription in India.

Cornwallis died without attaining any of the objects for the accomplishment of which he had been sent out for a second time to India.

His second tenure of office was not even of three months' duration. He was not able to either effect any reform or commit any mischief in the administration of India. The situation of political affairs in India stood exactly as left by the Marquess Wellesley on his departure from India. But there can be no doubt that the pacific intention and conciliatory spirit exhibited by Cornwallis had considerable effect in smoothing and paving the way towards bringing about peace with the Maratha princes.

CHAPTER XL

SIR GEORGE BARLOW'S ADMINISTRATION

(1805-1807)

THE TERMINATION OF THE SECOND MARATHA WAR AND PEACE WITH THE MARATHAS.

The war which the Marquess Wellesley had begun with the Marathas did not end in peace with his departure from India. As said before, had he remained a few months longer in India, the war would have been renewed with redoubled vigour and it is not known when and how it would have ended. But the Marquess Cornwallis's arrival in India and the declaration of his pacific intentions paved the way towards peace and cessation of hostilities. Lake was opposed to the views of Cornwallis. So the death of Cornwallis was hailed with joy by Lake, not only on public, but private considerations also, since as said before, under Cornwallis the business of Lake as Commander-in-Chief in India was gone. Lake now abandoned his intention of returning to Europe.

The death of Cornwallis brought Sir George Barlow, the senior member of the Council, to the office of Governor-General of India. Barlow was an apt pupil of the Marquess Wellesley, and was one of those fire-brands who preferred war to peace. On a previous page it has already been mentioned how his views made Wellesley decide to declare hostilities against the Maratha States. The financial situation and pressure from home were the considerations which had made, for a moment at least, the Marquess Wellesley hesitate to declare war with Sindhia and the Raja of Berar; but the advocacy of Barlow, not for peace but for the shedding of blood, egged on the Governor-General in his scheme of robbery, bloodshed and murder. Barlow as acting Governor-General could not carry on the policy of Lord Wellesley, because the Government and general public in England had already declared their opposition to it, and also the empty treasury would not permit him to do so. Nevertheless, he seems to have adopted a dishonest and dishonourable, mean and contemptible policy towards the native states of India, which will be presently referred to.

The junction of Holkar and Sindhia was not liked at all by the servants of the Company; they were naturally anxious to divide the interests of these two Maratha chieftains and thus dissolve their union. Cornwallis saw how this could be brought about. His views expressed in his letter to Lake under date of 19th September, 1805, clearly show how he had proposed to separate Sindhia from Holkar.

In the history of this period written by the English the separation of Holkar from Sindhia does not seem to have been properly explained. But it appears to us that the pacific intentions of Lord Cornwallis had some effect in inducing Sindhia to separate himself from Holkar. The latter had once played the Matatha Confederates false and did not join them, nay, even betrayed them, when they were at war with

the English. Consequently, Sindhia could not trust Holkar, however sincere the latter might have been, at this moment, in his professions.

The arrival of Cornwallis in India must have inspired Sindhia with hope for the reparation, partial at least, of those wrongs and injuries which the Marquess Wellesley had inflicted upon him. It is true that, although requested to do so, Lake did not formally communicate to Sindhia the views of the Governor-General for the settlement of the disputes expressed in his letter of the 19th September, 1805. But there are strong reasons for thinking that in an informal manner these views of Lord Cornwallis had been communicated to Sindhia, who had been led to believe that his separation from Holkar would mend matters and procure for him all those objects for which he was meditating war with the English. Our conjecture derives support from the fact that Munshi Kavel Nyne was chosen by them as the medium for bringing about peace with Sindhia. A few words regarding this Munshi are necessary to be stated here. He seems to have been a native of Northern India, presumably of Kashmir. He was in the employ of Sindhia, on whose behalf he had signed the Treaty of Peace concluded with the British towards the end of 1803. From the fact that he was very favourably inclined towards the English it is not unreasonable to suppose that he had been bribed by them to betray the interests of his master.

When Holkar, coming out of Bharatpur, joined Sindhia, and when from this junction there was every likelihood of the outbreak of war between the Marathas and the English, Kavel Nyne left his master and found shelter under the English Government at Delhi. His desertion from Sindhia is thus alluded to by Mr. Mill:

> "Moonshee Kavel Nyne was one of the confidential servants of Scindhia, who had been opposed to Serjee Rao Gautka, *and of course leaned to the British interests.* During the ascendency of Serjee Rao Gautka, Moonshee Kavel Nyne, from real or apprehended dread of violence, had fled from the dominions of Scindhia; and had taken shelter under the British Government at Delhi."*

The words put in italics in the above extract naturally confirm our suspicion already expressed above that this Munshi Kavel Nyne was in the pay of the British to betray the interests of his master.

This was the man whom the British had chosen to be their medium to bring about peace between them and Sindhia; and, it must be admitted that he served them very well indeed. Although Lake had not communicated in a formal manner to Sindhia the proposals which Cornwallis had thought would settle the disputes, yet there are strong grounds to believe that in an informal manner, Sindhia had been acquainted with the pacific intentions of the new Governor-General, and given to understand that all the possessions of which he had been deprived by the Marquess Wellesley would be restored to him provided he would separate himself from Holkar. Sindhia as yet was not fully acquainted with the nature of the servants of the Company with whom he had to deal. And it is probable that he was easily ensnared by their smooth promises. Had not Cornwallis met with his death in such an

* VI., 457.

unexpected manner, there is every probability that more generous treatment would have been accorded to Sindhia.

It is also probable that Holkar must have been, in an informal manner, acquainted with the intentions of Cornwallis, namely, that all the possessions conquered from him would be restored to him, provided he would cease hostilities. But once bit, twice shy. Holkar knew fully well the perfidious nature of the servants of the Company. He had no longer any faith in their smooth promises.

That intrigues had been carried on by the English with Munshi Kavel Nyne to persuade Sindhia to separate himself from Holkar would be evident from what Mill wrote regarding these transactions. He says:

"Upon the first intimation, from the new Governor-General to the Commander-in-Chief, of the altered tone of politics which was about to be introduced, Moonshee Kavel Nyne was invited to the camp of the Commander-in-Chief; where it was concerted, that one of his relations should speak to Scindhia, and explain to him the facility with which, through the medium of Moonshee Kavel Nyne, he might open a negotiation, calculated to save him from the dangers with which he was encompassed."*

These pacific intentions of Cornwallis then made Sindhia dissolve the union with Holkar. The latter now had to go and find an asylum somewhere else. Homeless, friendless and penniless, it speaks much to the credit of Holkar that he did not lose presence of mind and surrender himself to the English or sue for peace with them. Early in the month of September, Holkar left Ajmere and directed his steps towards the Panjab, giving out his expectation of being joined by the Sikh chiefs and even by the King of Kabul. This expectation on the part of Holkar was quite reasonable when we remember the circumstances of the times. The King of Kabul had threatened the British with an invasion of India. The Panjab was still, if not actually, at least nominally, subject to Kabul. The Sikhs were, therefore, the subjects of the Kabul sovereign. It was, therefore, natural for Holkar to expect assistance from the Sikhs. But in this he was disappointed. He was not at that time acquainted with the fact of the intrigues of the English with the Sikh Chieftains of the Panjab, persuading them to throw off their allegiance to the King of Kabul on the one hand, and not to lend a helping hand to the Marathas on the other.

It was after the death of Cornwallis that the Treaty of Peace was finally concluded with Sindhia. He had fallen into the trap laid for him by the servants of the Company, and, having separated from Holkar, it was impossible for him to get out of the trap. Regarding the re-employment of Kavel Nyne by Sindhia, Mill writes:

"Scindhia was eager to embrace the expedient, and immediately sent proposals through the medium of Kavel Nyne. By this contrivance the British commander stood upon the vantage ground; and stated, that he could attend to no proposition while the British Residency was detained."†

There was no other alternative left for Sindhia but to submit to be dictated by the English. Accordingly, he had to dismiss the Residency. Cornwallis having died, Barlow became the Governor-General of India. He did not offer such liberal terms to Sindhia

* Vol. vi., p. 457.

† Vol. vi., p. 458.

as his predecessor had intended. The treaty was concluded and signed on the 23rd November, 1805, under the auspices of Lake. It was signed on the part of Sindhia by Munshi Kavel Nyne, and on the part of the English by Malcolm. By this Treaty, several items of the previous Treaty, that is, the one concluded through General Wellesley at Surjee Anjengaum, were modified. There was no longer to be any defensive or subsidiary alliance between the English and Sindhia. Gwalior and the province of Gohud were likewise ceded to him. Lake, during the negotiations preceding the signature of the above Treaty, had left his station in the Upper Provinces and was marching in pursuit of Holkar, whom at last he overtook on the banks of the Beas. Holkar, as said before, did not obtain any help from the Sikhs. Ranjit Singh, who was the principal chief of the Sikhs in the Panjab at this time, did not afford any assistance to Holkar. A story is well-known in the Panjab how Holkar beseeched and entreated Ranjit Singh to make common cause with him and fight the English. The chief of the Sikhs not only turned a deaf ear to Holkar's appeals and entreaties, but advised him to go and place himself at their mercy for the restoration of his dominion. This Sikh Chief was no far-seeing statesman. Had he been so, he would not have intrigued with the English and helped them in dismembering the Maratha Empire. The rise of the Sikh monarchy in the Panjab, was, owing to political expediency, brought about by the English, in whose hands Ranjit Singh was more or less a puppet. Writing to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, in the Despatch, dated 25th September, 1803, the Governor-General in Council said:

"Raja Runjeet Sing, the Raja of Lahore and the principal amonst the Sikh chieftains, has transmitted proposals to the Commander-in-Chief for the transfer of the territory belonging to that nation south of the river Sutledge, on the condition of mutual defence against the respective enemies of that chieftain and of the British nation."

From this, it is quite evident then, that the English were mainly instrumental in the subsequent rise of Ranjit Singh. It was this expectation of aid from them which led Ranjit Singh to stand aloof and not come to the rescue of the Marathas when they had been most unjustly and aggressively attacked by the English. In his 'secret and official' letter dated 2nd August, 1803, the Marquess Wellesley wrote to Lake:

"Your Excellency has anticipated my opinion with respect to the expediency of endeavouring to obtain the co-operation of the principal chiefs of the tribe of Sikhs, in the approaching contest with the Maratha power.

* * * *

"I understand, that Rajah Runjeet Sing, the Rajah of Lahore, is considered to be the principal among the chiefs of the tribe of Sikhs, and to possess considerable influence over the whole body of Sikh chiefs.

"In the year 1800 the Resident with Dowlut Rao Scindhia, by my direction, despatched a confidential agent to the principal chiefs, for the purpose of persuading them to unite in opposing the apprehended invasion of Zamaun Shah and of conciliating them to the interests of the British Government.

* * * *

"Adverting to the great distance of Lahore from the scene of intended operations, the only

support to be expected from Raja Runjeet Sing, is the exertion of his influence with the other Sikh chieftains, to induce them to favor the cause of the British Government.

* * * *

"If it should appear impracticable to obtain the co-operation of those chieftains, it would still be an object of importance to secure their neutrality.

"In your communications to the Sikh Chieftains, it may be proper that your Excellency should suggest to their consideration the danger to which they will hereafter be exposed by any opposition to the interests of the British Government, and the advantages which they may derive from a connection with so powerful a state."

The rise of the Sikh monarchy in the Panjab under Ranjit Singh was due to the break-up of the Maratha Empire, for, in all probability, there would have been no Sikh monarchy, had not the Sikhs remained neutral, or even afforded help to the English in a clandestine manner when the Marathas were in their death struggle with them. Taking all these facts into consideration, it is not to be surprised at, that Holkar met with very scant hospitality at the hands of the future so-called Lion of the Panjab. Chivalry and knightly gallantry enjoining the grant of aid to weak and helpless men never entered largely into the character of the Sikh chiefs of the Panjab in the beginning of the 19th century. How does the character of the Jat Prince Ranjit Singh of Bharatpur compare with that of the Sikh Chief Ranjit Singh of the Panjab? The one afforded asylum to the destitute Holkar and carried out the laws of Oriental hospitality by making common cause with him and did not shrink from incurring the wrath of the English and exposing his dominions to their unjust and aggressive attack. The other in order to curry favor with them showed very cold shoulders to a refugee whom he should have, had he been true to the traditions of Oriental hospitality, not only afforded protection, but tried to meet his wishes by fighting the English as had done his namesake of Bharatpur.

When Holkar discovered he could not get any assistance from Ranjit Singh and other Sikh Chiefs of the Panjab, he had no other alternative than that of coming to terms with the English. To have gone to Kabul and asked the assitance of its ruler appeared to him to be a wild goose chase. He could not have done so, as the Sikh Chiefs in the Panjab would have certainly intercepted his going.* Mill writes:

"Totally disappointed in his hopes of assistance from the Sikh Chiefs, and reduced at last to the extremity of distress, he (Holkar) sent agents, with an application for peace, to the British camp."†

Lake was then on the banks of the river Beas and it is probable that he had made Ranjit Singh acquainted with the terms on which peace was to be concluded with Holkar, and asked him to persuade that Maratha Chieftain to send agents to his camp.

* Besides, it was quite impossible for the king of Kabul to have rendered any assistance in either men or money to Holkar. Afghanistan was at this time the scene of internecine feuds, domestic dissensions, bloodshed, murder and anarchy. All these were brought about through the machinations of the English. The Marquess Wellesley had, in 1799, despatched the well-known Sir John (at that time only Captain) Malcolm to Persia to instigate its ruler to send emissaries to Afghanistan to stir up dissensions, discords and disturbances in that country. The success which attended the exertions of the English exceeded all their expectations. So had Holkar gone to Kabul, he would not only have been disappointed, but in all probability his kingdom would have been annexed by the British.

† Vi., p. 466.

There is nothing improbable in this supposition, especially when we remember the fact of the intrigues that the British had so secretly carried on with the Sikhs since some years past.*

Holkar sent his agents to Lake's camp and on the 24th of December, 1805, a treaty was signed on the terms which Cornwallis had proposed. All his territories on the southern side of the rivers Tapti and Godavery, which the English had conquered, were restored to him. There were certain other articles in this Treaty to which we need not refer here.

Thus after all ended the second Maratha War. It showed the English the strong as well as the weak points in the Maratha character. It was the determined policy of the Marquess Wellesley to annihilate the Maratha Chiefs and their military resources, together with their international independence. He was only partially successful. He could not altogether annihilate them. Their military resources were to a great extent crippled, as well as their international independence. The Marquess Wellesley tried to draw within the octopodian arms of his co-religionists and compatriots all the Maratha States by forging on them the fetters of the subsidiary alliance. With the exception of the Peshwa, no other Maratha State was drawn into the abominable scheme of the subsidiary or so-called defensive alliance. But all the Maratha princes, the Peshwa, Sindhia, the Raja of Berar and Holkar—were most unjustly deprived of some of their most fertile provinces. That was the sum-total of the Second Maratha War.

Barlow, who succeeded Lord Cornwallis as Governor-General of India, was, as said before, trained in the school of diplomacy of the Marquess Wellesley, whose policy was to obtain political power in India by reducing the native princes to the position of mere figure-heads by imposing on them his scheme of subsidiary alliance. But now, his scheme was knocked on the head. Cornwallis was opposed to it, for after all, it landed the Company into costly, though not quite unprofitable wars. The low state of the finances of the East India Company would not allow Barlow to revive it or keep it going. He, therefore, considered it a matter of great political expediency to obtain the power of playing off one chief against the other. The princes of Rajputana had rendered assistance to the British during their war with the Marathas.

* In the autobiography of Amir Khan (p. 286) is related the manner in which Lord Lake made the world believe that it was Holkar who sued for peace and not the British. There we find it stated :

"In the meantime, General Lake advancing from Karnal came to Puteeala, and thence to the Sutluj, where he encamped under a fort. Leaving his baggage with a rear guard there, he marched again with his army, lightly equipped, to Suwaee Jullundur. The Council at Calcutta had written to urge the General to offer terms, and bring the war to an end as soon as possible. And the General saw himself that, if Runjeet Sing with the Puteeala Chief and other Sardars of this country, were to make common cause with the Maharaj (Holkar), a new flame would be lighted up, which it would be difficult to extinguish. He accordingly determined to follow his instructions in this respect, and with that view looked out for an intelligent skilful negotiator to be sent to Holkar's camp, and to be made the channel for an overture, in such guise that the Maharaj (Holkar) should be brought to sue for peace, and negotiations commence on that basis," . . . . ". Then Amir Khan describes the intrigues of General Lake in making it appear to all that it was Holkar who sued for peace.

They had been promised protection by the Marquess Wellesley and his agent Lake. In the defensive alliance with them it was guaranteed to them, that in the event of their being attacked by any one, the British Government of India would come to their rescue and afford them help to fight their enemies. But Barlow withdrew this defensive alliance from them, and tried to play off one against the other. His was the most ultra-Machiavellian policy for the extention and consolidation of the power of his countrymen in India.

Barlow's policy would never have been known to the outside world but for Sir John Malcolm. "Set a thief to catch a thief," is an old saw. Malcolm's political creed was no better than that of Barlow, and he would have never exposed him, but for the injuries he had received at his hand while Barlow was Governor of Madras. In his "Political History of India," Malcolm has very thoroughly exposed the dishonest and contemptible policy of Barlow. To quote the words of Malcolm, it was

"a policy, which declaredly looks to the disputes and wars of its neighbours, as one of the chief sources of its security; and which, if it does not directly excite such wars, shapes its political relations with inferior states in a manner calculated to create and continue them."

This policy was adopted by Barlow because the British Government of India were reduced to great pecuniary difficulties and were therefore unable to undertake wars for extension of their political power.

Regarding this policy of Barlow, Metcalfe wrote:

"The Governor-General in some of his dispatches, distinctly says that he contemplates in the discord of the native powers, an additional source of strength; and, if I am not mistaken, some of his plans go directly and *are designed* to foment discord among those states.

"But I can contemplate no source of strength in the discords of contiguous powers. It appears to me that in our advanced state of power no great contentions can arise which will not soon reach and entangle us. It is impossible completely to insulate ourselves, and we must be subject to the same chances which work upon states situated as we are."*

Barlow was not popular with the services. According to Lord Minto, Barlow's merits were the cause of his unpopularity. In a letter to Hon. Gilbert Elliott, dated Calcutta, September 15, 1807, Lord Minto wrote:

"He (Barlow) is not popular, and I believe his merits may have been the cause of it, or at least one among others. In truth, a Company's servant raised to the commanding height above his fellows which the Governor-General holds here, excites envy rather than respect or love. They are all comparing themselves with him, and their own pretensions with him."†

* *The Policy of Sir George Barlow,* from Kaye's Selections from the papers of Lord Metcalfe, p. 7.

† Countess of Minto's *Lord Minto in India.*

CHAPTER XLI.

THE MUTINY AT VELLORE.

(10th July, 1806).

The Christian servants of the East India Company, seeing the manner in which the Indian principalities were easily subverted, grew bolder and thought that the non-Christian religions of India also could be easily subverted by them. Marquess Wellesley was the pioneer in this direction. With this object in view he established the College at Fort William, Calcutta.

The Madras Presidency has always been suitable for the thriving of Christianity. The persecuted Nestorian Christians found an asylum there. St. Xavier and those who followed in his wake worked more successfully there than anywhere else in India. It is hence that the "benighted" presidency of Madras shows more native Christians than any other part of India.

Amongst the Christian officers serving out in India, some have always been great zealots in the cause of proselytism and tried to bring the "heathens" from darkness into light. They left no stone unturned to carry their scheme into execution.*

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Governor, Lord William Bentinck, and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir John Craddock of the Madras Presidency, with their zeal for so-called reforms, if not for proselytism, tried to ride rough-shod over the religious and social scruples of the Sepoys in that presidency without paying any heed to their feelings and sentiments. The "cunning despotism" which, to quote the words of Herbert Spencer, used "native soldiers to maintain and extend native subjection," was to be used to make India a Christian country. Certain innovations were introduced in the dress and social usages of the Sepoys by order of the Commander-in-Chief with the sanction of the Governor, but without consulting the native officers and men of the Madras Army.

The family members of Tipu were kept State prisoners at Vellore, a place well fortified and well garrisoned by British and native troops to keep those State prisoners in awe from committing any mischief to the Company's Government. It was at Vellore that the sepoys rose in arms and tried to make short work of the Christian officers and men stationed there. About 2 a. m. of 10th July, 1806, the sepoys assembled at the Main Guard and surrounded the residence of their commanding officer, Colonel Fancourt, who was awakened with a loud firing. When coming out of his house to quell the disturbance and when he was exerting himself under a very heavy fire, he was mortally wounded and died that evening at 4. But the mutiny was easily put down and the mutineers punished. As usual, a mixed commission

* See the Chapter on "Christianisation in India" in my work on "The Consolidation of the Christian Power in India."

was appointed to inquire into the causes of the Mutiny. The Civil Servants of the Company attributed it to the absurd and foolish military measures; while the military officers regarded it as a conspiracy in favour of the sons of Tipu, who were therefore removed from Vellore to Bengal.

There can be little doubt that the outbreak was due to the novel and absurd military measures introduced in the Sepoy Army. The Sepoy was ordered

"not (to) mark his face to denote his caste, or wear earrings, when dressed in his uniform; and it is further directed that at all parades, and upon all duties, every soldier of the battalion shall be clean shaved on the chin. It is directed also that uniformity shall be preserved in regard to the quantity and shape of the hair upon the upper lip, as far as may be practicable."

Both the Governor and the Commander-in-Chief were justly punished by being recalled from their offices. The Bengal Government were satisfied of the highly good conduct of the sons and other family members of Tipu Sultan and exculpated them from the charge of exciting the mutiny and granted them every indulgence. The news of the Mutiny at Vellore, when received in England after several months of its occurrence, produced great panic there. The natives of that country attributed it to the attempts of the authorities at the conversion of India. Revd. Sydney Smith wrote in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1807 on *The Conversion of India,* in which he tried to show how the Civil Servants of the Company were giving encouragement to the missionaries to propagate their faith and proselytise the swarthy heathens. He wrote :

"In 1804, the *Missionary Society*, a recent institution, sent a new mission to the coast of Coromandel, from whose papers we think it right to lay before our readers the following extracts :

"March 31st, 1805.—Waited on A. B. He says *Government seems to be very willing to forward our views.* We may stay at Madras as long as we please; and when we intend to go into the country, on our application to the Governor by letter, he would issue orders for granting us passports which would supersede the necessity of a public petition :—Lords Day.'".

It should be borne in mind that the Governor referred to above was Lord William Bentinck. Revd. Mr. Sydney Smith wrote further that the missionaries "obtain their passports from Government, and the plan and objects of their mission are printed, free of expense, at the Government press...." In another Number, the Missionaries write thus to the Society of London, about a fortnight before the massacre at Vellore :

"Every encouragement is offered us by the established Government of the country. Hitherto they have granted us every request, whether solicited by ourselves or others. Their permission to come to this place, their allowing us an acknowledgment for preaching in the fort which sanctions us in our work, together with the grant which they have lately given us to hold a large spot of ground every way suited for missionary labours, are objects of the last importance, and remove every impediment which might be apprehended from this source. We trust not to an arm of flesh; but when we reflect on these things, we cannot but behold the loving kindness of the Lord.'

In a letter of the same date we learn from Brother Ringletanbe the following fact :

"The Dewan of Travancore sent me word that if I despatched one of our Christians to him he would give me leave to build a church at Magilandy. Accordingly, I shall send in a short time. For this important service our Society is indebted alone to Colonel——, without *whose determined and fearless interposition none of their missionaries would have been able to set a foot in that country.*"

It is not necessary to quote any further from Mr. Smith's article. Bentinck and his compatriots in authority in India were doing everything in their power to encourage the missionaries with the aim of the conversion of the 'heathens.'

One Abbe Dubois was a Roman Catholic priest who came out to the Madras Presidency when Lord William Bentinck was its Governor. It may be, that under his dictation, the priest wrote that notorious book named *Hindu Customs, Manners and Ceremonies.* The Governor purchased the MS, written in French, for 8000 Rupees in 1807, for the East India Company, who bestowed on the author a special pension for it. Dubois' work was the precursor of Miss Katherine Mayo's "Mother India," for that priest abused the Hindus in no measured terms.* Professor C. S. Srinivasachari's account of Dubois appears in Indian Historical Records Commission, Vol. IX.

The Mutiny at Vellore occurred during the Governor-Generalship of Sir George Barlow. Although he was expecting to be confirmed in that office, for he had the support of the East India Company, he was greatly disappointed at being superseded by Lord Minto, who was appointed by the Ministry to that post. However, as a solatium, Sir George Barlow was made Governor of Madras in place of Lord William Bentinck, who was recalled.

* See *the Modern Review* for October 1927, pp. 486-487.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE FIRST LORD MINTO'S ADMINISTRATION

(1807-1813 A. D.)

The unjust and aggressive war on the Maratha princes commenced by the Marquess Wellesley had been brought to a close in a manner not reflecting much credit either on the valour or on the diplomatic skill of the European soldiers or administrators then in India. The retreat of the troops under the command of Monson before Holkar ; Lake's repeated failures in reducing the fort of Bharatpur ; the restoration of the fortress of Gwalior and the province of Gohud to Sindhia ; and finally, the *restoration of his territories and possessions to* Jaswant Rao *Holkar, did not certainly* raise the prestige of the European generals and administrators in India. The Marquess Wellesley had also pressed the Maratha princes to accept his nefarious scheme of Subsidiary Alliance. But excepting the Peshwa, no other Maratha prince,—neither Sindhia nor Holkar nor even the Raja of Berar, was willing to place this yoke on his own neck.*

The sum total, then, of the Second Maratha War was this ; that the Raja of Berar and Sindhia were made to part with some of their fertile provinces, but they did not lose their independence and were not reduced to the position of feudatory princes, like the Nizam or the Peshwa, under the protection of the British Government of India. Holkar also was very fortunate, since he neither lost his independence nor any portion of his territory.

The British were then having a very critical time in India. The charm of their military supremacy was a thing of the past. They were the laughing stock of all the independent states of India. † Then their throwing overboard the princes of Rajputana,

* British prestige in India had indeed fallen to a very low ebb, and it is necessary to go back to the expedition against the Marathas undertaken in the regime of Warren Hastings to find a parallel to the heavy blow which had been struck at British dominion in India. The ambitious designs of the Europeans had been frustrated.

† Lord Minto, in his secret and separate general letter dated May 16, 1808, to the Directors of the East India Company, concerning the disposition of the native states, wrote :

"We have every reason to believe that all the states of India are satisfied of our disinclination to extend our dominions or to invade their rights, and of our solicitude to maintain peace. But those states of which the power and dominion have been abridged, or of which the influence has been circumscribed and against which the field of ambition and enterprise has been closed by the political position of the British power and ascendancy in India, cannot reasonably be supposed to entertain that sense of common interest with the British Government which should induce them to prefer the security of their actual condition to the alluring prospect of restored possessions, consequence, and authority. And demonstrations of the dangers to which their authority and

especially the Rana of Gohud, who had rendered them assistance in their hour of need and without whose help they would have, in all probability, been swept out of the country, not only amounted to base ingratitude but bad faith of a diabolical character. Of course their designs regarding the native states, given expression to by Barlow, already referred to in Chapter XL, were not then known to the ruling princes of India.

The inhabitants of the territories then under the administration of the British Company were groaning under the pressure of taxation imposed on them. Not only did India pay for all the wars which enabled the British to establish their empire, but all the surplus revenue of India was drained out of the country to pay dividends to the merchants constituting the East India Company. Even a writer of such liberal sentiments as James Mill, the well-known author of an Indian History, did not feel ashamed to say:

"The financial results of the operations of Government from the close of the first administration of the Marquis Cornwallis, till the present remarkable era, (i.e., 1806), should now be adduced. As regards the British nation, it is in these results that the good or evil of its operations in India is wholly to be found. *If India affords a surplus revenue which can be sent to England, thus far is India beneficial to England.*"*

But the wars which the Marquess Wellesley carried on, did not afford a surplus revenue which could be sent to England. It was on that account that the Directors of the East India Company in England ordered their Governor-General in India to cease from war, and on his persisting in it, they were obliged to order his recall from India.

When Lord Minto arrived in India, the finances of the Government were tottering under the burden imposed upon them by the Maratha war.†

independence would be exposed by the ambition of France would have little weight when opposed to the assurance of restoration to the dominion they have lost.

"With states of another description, engagements of co-operation might no doubt be formed, provided these engagements should not involve obligations of defensive alliance against all enemies. Of such alliances there is too much reason to doubt the efficiency and policy."

* *Vol. VI. p. 471.*

† Lord Minto left England for India in December, 1806 and assumed the reins of Government at Calcutta on July 3, 1807. He was a friend of Burke. Lady Minto in her work on Lord Minto in India writes :—

"Lord Minto's early and intimate connection with Burke was the keynote of his political career. For that great man he formed an enthusiastic affection which was returned with so much tenderness and confidence that, when indulging after long years in a retrospect of their old friendship, he was able to say, 'I believe I was among those whom Burke loved best, and most trusted.'

"It was no doubt due to Sir Gilbert's ardent sympathy with the views and the labours of his friend that in 1782 he was designated as one of the seven Parliamentary Directors (the seven kings, as they were called) to be appointed under the provisions of Mr. Fox's India Bill.

"The measure was lost, and as with it collapsed the ministry and the reign of the Whig party, the honour was a barren one : but his first appearance on the political stage in a leading part was nevertheless destined to be connected with the interests of India. Two sessions had passed since he and Mirabeau stood together at the Bar of the House of Commons to listen to the great tribune

De Boigne

George Thomas

Earl of Minto

Sir Philip Francis, K. B.

Such was the critical situation of the British during the latter half of the first decade of the nineteenth century. Their prestige as a military nation was as its lowest ebb; their treasuries were empty and their public credit was shaken.

Lord Minto had to devise means for the defence of India. It should be remembered that at the time of which we are taking note, there was the possibility of rebellion of the inhabitants in the territories under the administration of the Europeans as well as of invasion of those territories by the independent powers of India, and possibly also by the sovereign of Afghanistan. Lord Minto fully understood the position and took measures to avert the dangers which stared the Europeans in the face. It is necessary to describe the measures adopted by him, which saved the expulsion of his co-religionists and compatriots from India.

First of all, there was the possibility, as said before, of the inhabitants of those territories which were then under the administration of the British, rising in arms against the alien usurpers of their rights and independence, and driving them out of the country. To prevent this contingency arising the Europeans acted on the maxim of *divide et impera*; and also generally excluded Indians from offices of trust and posts of responsibility. But there was something worse. The state of disorder then existing in Bengal was such that it could not have been worse if Lord Minto and his predecessors had deliberately devised means to prevent the people from uniting, on the assumption that in the miseries

of England, when Sir Gilbert himself made his first important effort in that formidable assembly, and moved the impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey in a speech which elicited the warm admiration of its most illustrious members.

"In the following year he became one of the managers in the trial of Warren Hastings. 'His earnest desire,' he said in his opening speech on that occasion, 'to befriend the natives of India had decided him to undertake a business in many respects most uncongenial to his nature.' But another determining cause was the urgency with which Burke besought him to throw off his modesty, 'his only fault,' and the warmth of encouragement which hailed his opening effort. A note written in December 1787 and sent to Sir Gilbert with a book intended to be of use to him while engaged in the preparation of his charge against Sir Elijah Impey, ends thus :

'God bless you and forward your good undertaking. Stick to it. You have years before you, and if I were of your age, and had your talents and your manners, I should not despair of seeing India a happy country in a few years.

Yours Ever,
E. BURKE.' "

To understand his Indian policy, it is necessary to know something of his antecedents before his assumption of the office of Governornor-General of India. Happily, the details of his pre-Indian career are supplied by the three volumes of his *Life and Letters* from 1752 to 1806 by his great-niece, the Countess of Minto, published in 1874.

Although Lord Minto was a great friend of Burke, that friendship came to an end on the outbreak of the French Revolution. Henceforth he paid homage to Pitt, into whose confidence he wormed himself. He had been offered the Governorship of Madras, but declined it. But Piit rewarded his adhesion to him by appointing him Viceroy of Corsica, a post which he held till 1796. Afterwards he was appointed minister at Vienna and held the post until the end of 1801.

Pitt was no Little Englander. He was desirous of founding a British Empire in India to compensate for the loss of America. As a confidential friend and protege of Pitt, in all human probability, he was thoroughly acquainted with Pitt's views and so during his administration he tried to give effect to those views. This explains his vigorous foreign policy while ruling India.

of the natives of India lay the strength of their European rulers and that it was therefore necessary to create distractions, disorder and confusion among them. There is, of course, no proof to show that dacoits were deliberately let loose among them or that dacoities were encouraged. But there are also no records to show that any effective steps were taken to prevent dacoities. Lord Dufferin, in his famous speech at St. Andrews Dinner, Calcutta, on the 30th of November, 1888, said:

"Indeed, it was only the other day that I was reading a life of Lord Minto, who mentions incidentally that in his time whole districts within twenty miles of Calcutta were at the mercy of dacoits, and this after the English had been more than fifty years in the occupation of Bengal."

But Dufferin did not offer any explanation for the existence of dacoits and the perpetration of dacoities in Bengal. It should be remembered that the natives of England had been ruling in Bengal ever since their gaining the battle of Plassey in 1757. They had established their supremacy there for above half a century, and yet it is a significant fact that dacoits thrived and flourished there when Lord Minto was the Governor-General.*

Regarding the dacoits and their offences, James Mill writes:

"This class of offences did not diminish under the English Government and its legislative provisions. It increased, to a degree highly disgraceful to the legislation of a civilized people. *It increased under the English Government, not only to a degree of which there seems to have been no example under the native Governments of India, but to a degree surpassing what was ever witnessed in any country in which law and government could with any degree of propriety be said to exist.*"†

From the sentences we have put in italics, it might be possible for a historian to to suggest that the British Government of India of that period had a hand in encouraging dacoits for the purposes already mentioned above. But in the absence of positive proof, we would not go so far. We would only say that effective steps were not taken to put down or even to discourage dacoities.

Sir Henry Strachey, one of the British judges in India in the beginning of the nineteenth century, also wrote:

"The crime of dacoity has, I believe, increased greatly, since the British administration of justice."

In 1808, the judge of circuit in the Rajeshahye division also wrote:

"That dacoity is very prevalent in Rajeshahye has been often stated. But if its vast extent were known; if the scenes of horror, the murders, the burnings, the excessive cruelties, which are continually perpetrated here, were properly represented to Government, I am confident that some

* To be fair to Lord Minto, it is necessary to say that the dacoits were not brought into existence by him; but the dacoits and the dacoities were the results of the so-called judicial reforms of the Marquess Cornwallis. There can be no doubt that the Marquess Cornwallis introduced these so-called reforms with the object of creating distractions in India. Lord Minto took advantage of the state of affairs then prevailing in the territories under his administration, and it does not appear that he ever took such effective steps to either bring the dacoits to book or to prevent the dacoities from taking place as were undertaken by his successor, the Marquess of Hastings, to ostensibly crush the Pindaris.

† V. 537.

measures would be adopted, to remedy the evil. *Yet the situation of the people is not sufficiently attended to. It cannot be denied, that in point of fact, there is no protection for persons or property."*

Mr. Dowdeswell, the Secretary to Government, reported in 1809, that:

"To the people of India there is no protection, either of persons or of property."

Rergarding the operations of the dacoits, Mill truly observed :

"Such is the military strength of the British Government in Bengal, that it could exterminate all the inhabitants with the utmost ease; such at the same time is its *civil* weakness, that it is unable to save the community from running into that extreme disorder where the villain is more powerful to intimidate than the Government to protect." V. p : 410.

Would it be very unfair to infer from the above extracts that it was not the policy of the Government of those days to protect the people against the dacoits, for the prosperity and welfare, and consequent strength of the people meant danger to the alien, unsympathetic and selfish rulers of the land during that period? This was the state of affairs in India after over half-a-century's administration of the country by the servants of the East India Company.*

* It is necessary to give Lord Minto's explanation of the existence of dacoits and the perpetration of dacoities. In a letter to Lady Minto, extracts from which are given in "Lord Minto in India" (page 185), Lord Minto wrote :—

"They (the dacoits) have of late come within thirty miles of Barrackpur. The crime of gang robbery has at all times, though in different degrees, obtained a footing in Bengal. The prevalence of the offence, occasioned by its success and impunity, has been much greater in this civilised and flourishing part of India, than in the wilder territories adjoining, which have not enjoyed so long the advantages of a regular and legal government; and it appears at first sight mortifying to the English administration of these provinces, that our oldest possessions should be the worst protected against the evils of lawless violence.

"It has been said that the prosperity and undisturbed tranquillity of these lower provinces, which have never seen war within their limits during the present generation of their inhabitants, that is to say, for half a century, have afforded two inducements to the desperate associations which have so constantly harassed them under the name of dacoits. First, the riches of the country have presented the temptation of good plunder. Second, the long security which the country has enjoyed from foreign enemies, and the consequent loss of martial habits and character, have made the people of Bengal so timid and enervated, that no resistance is to be apprehended in the act, nor punishments afterwards. There have, however, certainly been other more specific causes for the extraordinary prevalence of the crime at particlar quarters. Among these has been the nature of our judicial and police establishments. The judge and magistrate is an English gentleman; but all his subordinate officers and instruments are necessarily *native*. The probity and good intention of the English magistrate may in general be relied upon; but his vigilance, personal activity, intelligence, or talents, are not equal in all cases to his integrity. The consequence often is, that the practical and efficient part of the police is cast upon the black subaltern officers, amongst whom, it is hardly too much to say, although it sounds like an uncharitable partiality to my own fair complexion, that there is scarcely an exception to universal venality and corruption."

There is a proverb current in India that whosoever goes to Lanka (Ceylon) turns a cannibal. So it was no wonder that Lord Minto, who, as Sir Gilbert Elliot, was a friend of Burke, had moved the impeachment of Sir Elijah Impey and been one of the managers of the trial of Warren Hastings, should, after breathing the atmosphere of the Anglo-Indian society of India, have nourished uncharitable

A passing allusion must be made here to the tone adopted by all British writers on Indian history while speaking of the benefits conferred by their rule on the people of India. These writers are never tired of describing, by mainly indenting on their imagination, the so-called anarchy alleged to have prevailed in India on the break-up of the Mughal Empire. But so far they have not adduced any evidence to prove that anarchy existed in India previous to the assumption of the Government of Bengal by the British. During the last days of the Mughal Empire, while that empire was *in extremis,* military adventurers and also the servants of the Mughal Emperors tried to dismember the empire and succeeded in setting up independent kingdoms in several provinces of India. It was in this manner that Asaf Jah at Hydarabad and Saadat Khan in Oudh established their independent principalities. But there was no anarchy or internal disorder anywhere. There was no doubt some bloodshed, for no independent principality could have been brought into existence without waging wars and fighting battles. But it can be proved from historical accounts that there were more wars and battles in Europe during the 18th, and the beginning of the 19th century—in fact till the defeat and capture of Napoleon at Waterloo—than in India at the time when the Mughal Empire was tottering to pieces, or independent principalities and states were being carved out by the disloyal servants of the Mughal Emperors or by the Marathas or Rajputs. But the rulers of all these newly established states made it a principal object of their administration to be acquainted with the wants and desires of their subjects and to afford protection to their persons and properties. It cannot be said that anarchy or internal disorder existed in any form or shape in these newly raised independent states. But this cannot be said of the British rulers

feelings towards the people of India, and libelled and abused them to his heart's content. It is natural for Anglo-Indians to credit their fat-salaried countrymen with whatever good traits they discover in the administration of India, and impute the faults to the ill-paid native Indian officers or the natives of the country whenever anything goes wrong in the government of this country. Yes, Indians are made scapegoats for all crimes of omission and commission in Indian affairs ! The British officers—those who constituted the class whom Lord Minto's deceased friend Burke described as 'birds of prey and passage in India,' who came out to India to shake the pagoda tree and grow rich and on their return to their native country to play "Nabobs," were all immaculate beings and therefore "the probity and good intentions of the English magistrate may in general be relied upon." Lord Minto was a believer in the myth that the co-religionists and compatriots of Clive and Warren Hastings were, like Ceasar's wife, above all suspicion.

In some of the extracts made above, it is admitted that in the territories ruled by Native princes there was not such anarchy as in the adjoining British territory. Yet these Native territories had subordinate officers derived from the same class of Indians as that from which the corresponding class of the Indian servants of the East India Company were drawn. Had the Company then the misfortune of attracting to its service a very much larger proportion of rascals than were drawn to the service of the Native princes ? In Lord Minto's opinion, British territory was richer than the adjoining native territory, and that was one cause of the dacoities in the British territory. But where are the proofs of this superior wealth ?

That British subjects were emasculated is a damaging admission. Lord Minto's words, "loss of martial habits and character," with reference to the people of Bengal, is an admission that they had "martial habits and character" before the establishment of British rule in Bengal.

of that age and the territories under their administration. It seems that they never cared for the welfare or prosperity of their subjects, whose persons and properties they never took any step to protect.

It is also a singular fact that distractions and disorders commenced to appear in the different states of India not very long after the British established themselves as a political power in Bengal. It may hence be presumed that the Europeans sent emissaries to the states and principalities of Indian India to create distraction and confusion and disorder in them in order that they might be able to extend their power. It was the Europeans who helped the Nawab Vazir of Oudh to murder in cold blood the brave inhabitants of Rohilkhand.

So then, though it may not have been a matter of political expediency during the administration of Lord Minto not to give peace or afford security to the persons and properties of the inhabitants of the territories then under the rule of the East India Company, such peace and security were not enjoyed by them.

But the rising in arms of Indians of their own territories against their tyrannical rule was not the only danger which the British had to apprehend. The Marathas had been defeated but not altogether crushed. It was quite possible for them to combine again and take revenge on their British persecutors and aggressors. The persecutions to which Holkar had been subjected for so many years, the disappointments which he had met with, told on his health and he went out of his mind and became insane in 1808. Holkar was an ambitious prince and his becoming insane was very fortunate for the British at this critical period of their existence in India. So Lord Minto had no fear from Holkar. The character of Jaswant Rao Holkar has been thus described by Grant Duff:

"The chief feature of Jeswant Rao Holkar's character was that hardy spirit of energy and enterprise which, though, like that of his countrymen, boundless in success, was also apt to be discouraged by trying reverses. He was likewise better educated than Marathas in general, and could write both the Persian language and his own: his manner was frank, and could be courteous... In person his stature was low, but he was of a very active strong make; though his complexion was dark and he had lost an eye by the accidental bursting of a match lock, the expression of his countenance was not disagreeable, and bespoke something of droll humor, as well as of manly boldness."*

The derangement of the intellect of such a prince was not a small gain to the British, who were further fortunate when it was settled that the government of Holkar's dominions should be administered by a regency controlled by Amir Khan, but under the nominal authority of Tulsibai, the favourite mistress of Jaswant Rao. On the death of Jaswant Rao, she adopted Mulhar Rao Holkar, a boy of four years of age, and in his name, continued to govern. Amir Khan was a Pathan soldier of fortune, and a leader of those men who were known in Indian history as Pindaris. The position which Amir Khan came to occupy in the government of Holkar's dominion was an event highly favourable to the cause of the British. Grant Duff writes:

"Ameer Khan was soon recalled to Rajputana in the prosecution of his own views, which were

* P. 606

solely bent upon the extention of predatory power for the interest of himself and his ferocious band of Pathans.........When it suited his views of plunder Ameer Khan sometimes advanced claims in Holkar's name but *those claims were not pressed where the consequence might involve the state of Holkar with the British Government.*"*

The words put in italics in the above extract clearly show how anxious Amir Khan was to be in the good graces of the British Government of India. He further served as its cat's-paw by not bringing about order and good government in the state of which he was the virtual dictator. Grant Duff writes :

"The Government, if such it may be designated, of Holkar was alternately swayed by two factions, the Marathas and the Pathans, who were constantly intriguing against each other, and nothing could exceed the state of anarchy which prevailed 'throughout the country'."

This was exactly what suited the purpose of the British rulers. For the same historian writes :

"It was expected that their (the Maratha Chiefs') domestic wars, the plunder of their neighbours, and the fear of losing what they possessed, would deter them from hostile proceedings against the British Government."

So then it would not require much exercise of one's intelligence to infer that all the distractions and anarchy in the Holkar's Government, may have been created through the instrumentality of Amir Khan and served the selfish ends of the British. From the Government of Holkar there was no danger to the Company ; nay, on the contrary, from the fact that Amir Khan was the virtual dictator of that state, they expected help and asssistance from him to keep their position secure in India.

But from the other Maratha princes, especially Sindhia, there was the danger of invasion of their territories. The frontiers of British India were at this time contiguous to those of the Maratha princes, *viz.*, the Raja of Berar and the Maharaja Sindhia. Both these princes had been defeated by the British Government and made to part with a large portion of their dominions. It was not impossible that these princes would take revenge on the Britishers, since vengeance sleeps long but never dies. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, that steps should be taken to prevent Sindhia, known to have been an ambitious prince, as well as the Raja of Berar, from committing any mischief in British India. The finances of the Company were not such as to have allowed them to maintain a large army to guard their frontiers against the inroads of any of the Maratha princes. It seems to us that the British effected their own safety by creating distractions and disorders in the states of the Maratha Princes, not only by sending their own emissaries into those states, but keeping in their pay, as well as encouraging the Pindaris. We have arrived at this opinion by taking into consideration the facts and circumstances described below.

The Marquess Wellesley never concealed the fact that he desired to create distractions in the dominions of Dowlat Rao Sindhia when he was going to war with Tipu and trying to impose his scheme of subsidiary alliance on the neck of the Peshwa. At that time Dowlat Rao Sindhia was in the Deccan and it was considered necessary by the Governor-General that that Prince should return to Hindustan. To effect this,

* *P. 607.*

he did not scruple to instruct his subordinates to devise means and send emissaries to that prince's dominion to stir up distractions. Again, when he wanted to go to war with the Maratha confederates, he instructed Lake, then in the Upper Provinces, to send emissaries to Sindhia's territories for the sole purpose of creating disorder. It is evident from the Marquess Wellesley's published despatches that, that Governor-General indulged in conspiracies and intrigues against Dowlat Rao Sindhia. It is therefore not unreasonable to presume that at this critical period of their history in India, the British :rulers should have also adopted the very same means which the Marquess Wellesley had done with such marked success not very long ago. In this connection, Barlow's policy—policy, which declaredly looks to the disputes and wars of its neighbours, as one of the chief sources of its (British Government's) security"—should not be lost sight of.

Moreover, an embassy had been despatched to Persia under Sir John Malcolm with the avowed object of instigating the Muhammadan severeign of that country to invade the territory of a friendly, and besides a Muhammadan prince, that is, of Afghanistan, to prevent the latter from ever giving trouble to the Europeans in India. We shall have occasion to refer to this Persian embassy later on. What we want here to emphasize is this, that while steps had been taken to prevent an independent power several thousands of miles away from the frontiers of British India from giving any trouble to the British Government, was it probable that precautionary measures should have been neglected against the inroads of the Maratha princes, especially when we remember the fact that they had been wronged and injured and were therefore expected to take revenge on the Government of India ? The frontiers of British India and of the territories under the administration of the Maratha princes were contiguous and therefore it was much easier for the latter to always harass and give endless trouble to the British than for the Afghan sovereign to cross rocky passes and march through deserts before he could reach the British territories in India. The very existence of distractions and disorders in the dominions of the Maratha princes should lead us to suspect that these were mostly the work of the emissaries of the British Government.

It was not only by means of emissaries that the Europeans created all these distractions, but it is also most probable that the services of the Pindaris were also utilised for bringing about this miserable state of affairs in the Maratha states. It is not necessary here to devote much space to tracing the origin of the Pindaries. Regarding them Professor H. H. Wilson writes :

"The Pindaries, as a body of irregular horse, serving without pay, and receiving in lieu of it, license to plunder, appear to have originated in the South of India, constituting an [element in the composition of the armies of the last Muhammadan dynasties of the Deccan. After their downfall, the services of the Pindaries were transferred to the Marathas, with whom they served against Aurangzeb, and at a still later date, after that event, their leaders settled chiefly in Malwa, and attaching themselves respectively to Sindhia and Holkar, became distinguished as Sindhia Shahi, and Holkar Shahi Pindaries, receiving grants of land chiefly in the vicinity of the Nerbudda, for the maintenance of themselves and their followers in time of peace, on the condition of gratuitous co-operation in time of war."

The Pindaris thus appear to have been a sort of unpaid militia whose services were required only in time of war ; at other times they used to lead the lives of peaceful cultivators. Lest these Pindaris should give trouble to the Europeans, it would seem that they were subsidised by them not only to keep them out of their territories, but also to create distractions in the dominions of the Maratha princes. That at one time at least the Pindaris were subsidised by the Company appears very clearly from the despatches of the Duke of Wellington. Dating his letter from camp, twelve miles north of the Gutpurba, 29th March, 1803, the Duke of Wellington (at that time Major General Wellesley) wrote to General Stuart :

"I enclose the translation of a paper, which, with the concurrence and advice of Major Malcolm, I have given to Appa Saheb's Vakeel.

"He has had three thousand Pindaries in his service, to whom he gave no pay and who subsisted by plundering the Raja of Kolapoor. In order that all these chiefs may come forward in the service of the Peishwa at the present crisis, I have prevailed upon them to cease hostilities and, of course, Appa Saheb's Pindaries can no longer subsist upon the plunder they might require in the territory of the Raja of Kolapoor . . . *If he (the Peishwa) should not approve of retaining them, they may either be discharged, or may be employed in the plunder of the enemy without pay, according to circumstances ; and at all events, supposing that his Highness should refuse to pay their expenses. . . . . . the charge to the Company will be trifling in comparison with the benefit which this detachment must derive from keeping this body of Pindaries out of Holkar's services, and from cutting off our communications with the army.*'"*

From the words put in italics in the above extracts, the motive which prompted the future Iron Duke to subsidize the Pindaris is quite evident. The reasons which he urged for bribing the Pindaris applied with equal force to the critical situation in which the Government of India found itself during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Minto. It is not therefore improbable that the same means should have also been adopted in Minto's time which General Wellesley had advocated years previously to have the Pindaris "employed in the plunder of the enemy without pay". That these Pindaris were in the pay of the Company seems highly probable from an incidental circumstance mentioned in a foot-note by Grant Duff in his history of the Marathas. That author writes :

"For a long time they *(Pindaris)* respected the persons of the British subjects, to which the author (Captain Grant Duff) can bear testimony, having accidentally passed through a body of *(Pindaris)* in the middle of a night when they had committed excesses : and to him, though unarmed and unattended, they offered neither molestation nor insult."

The only explanation for the Pindaris refraining from molesting or insulting British subjects would lie in the hypothesis that the Pindaris were in the pay of the Company and therefore were bound not to molest or insult them. But those who sow the wind, reap the whirl-wind. The Pindaris after all commenced raids in the provinces of British India. Grant Duff writes :

"For some time, until the districts in Malwa, Marwar, Mewar, and the whole of Rajputana were exhausted, and the *Pindaris* were excited to venture on more fertile fields, their ravages were chiefly

* Duke of Wellington's Despatches, Vol. I., pp. 120-111. See also *Origin of the Pindaris* (Allahabad reprint).

confined to those countries and Berar ; ....But even had no other causes arisen to excite the *Pindaris* to extend their depredations, it was impossible, in the state in which India was left by the half measures and *selfish policy* adopted by the British Government, that any part of it could long remain exempt from predatory inroad. The Rajput states were overrun by Amir Khan, Sindhia, Holkar and the *Pindaris* ; and the territories of Sindhia and Holkar, intermixed as they were in Malwa, at the hands of a powerful and lawless soldiery, soon became like Rajputana, common prey."*

The *"selfish policy,"*, as shown in the words of Barlow quoted on a previous page, was the policy adopted by the British to 'maintain their "security" in India. It has also been hinted at before, that this "selfish policy" must have dictated the British to pay and instigate the *Pindaris* to create distractions in the states of the non-Christian princes of India. Of course, all the *Pindaris* and their leaders were not bribed and subsidized. The policy was to play off one against the other, and so acting on this policy, they would have only favoured a few in order to excite the jealousies of the others and succeed in inducing them to cut each other's throats. It seems almost *certain that Amir Khan was one of those whom the British subsidized, since he was* an intelligent and powerful freebooter and had also a large following. To this circumstance, perhaps, is to be attributed the fact of his never committing raids in the adjacent territories of British India.

The provinces .then under the administration of the Company in India, were after all, not free from the ravages of the Pindaris. It was towards the close of Lord Minto's rule, that is, about the year 1812, that the Pindaris first made their appearance in British India. The real reasons for their raids in the British territories cannot be very definitely and with certainty stated. It may be, as Grant Duff writes, that the Pindaris, after having exhausted the districts of the native states, "were encouraged and excited to venture on more fertile fields." But we suspect that it was the withdrawal of the subsidy of certain Pindari leaders which might have prompted them to commit ravages in the British territories. It is also not impossible that the Pindaris were secretly encouraged by the independent native princes to make raids on the British provinces, as a retaliatory measure against what they had suffered at the hands of the Christian Government of India.

The fact being remembered that the Pindaris were a sort of irregular militia, who, in time of peace, cultivated their fields or followed their own professions, and that their services were only requisitioned as camp followers in time of war to plunder and annoy the enemy's country and army, the question naturally arises why after the termination of the Second Maratha War, the Pindaris, instead of leading their peaceful avocations, were always in a state of perpetual warfare and created distractions, disorder, confusion and anarchy in the dominions of the principal native princes, with whom not very long ago the Europeans had been at war. Does not this very fact suggest the answer that the Pindaris were encouraged and bribed by the Europeans to create distractions in the native states, in order that the Europeans might enjoy security in the territories then under their administration ?

Amir Khan, as has been already said before, was in the pay of the Europeans. He

* P. 611.

never crossed swords with or gave trouble to, the latter.* Nevertheless, they at one time were desirous to crush him, when he invaded the dominion of the Raja of Berar. It was not out of any love for the Raja that the Europeans came to his rescue, but it was political expediency which prompted them to adopt the course which they did. Amir Khan's reasons for invading the Raja of Berar's territory are thus set forth by H. H. Wilson in his edition of Mill's History of India :

"Left without control by the insanity of Holkar, keeping together a numerous body of troops, for the payment of which he possessed no means of his own, Amir Khan, after exhausting the resources of the Rajput princes, was compelled to look abroad for plunder, and enlarge the field of his depredations. The Raja of Berar was selected as the victim of his necessities.

"In the commencement of his political career, Jeswant Rao Holkar had been detained for some time as a prisoner at Nagpur, and according to his own assertion, was pillaged by the Raja of jewels of very great value. Ameer Khan now demanded, in the name of Holkar, the restitution of the jewels or their price ; and, as the demand was not complied with, he moved, in January 1809, to the frontiers of Berar with all his force. No serious opposition was offered to Ameer Khan's advance."

"Although not bound by the terms of the existing treaty to give military aid to the Raja of Nagpur against his enemies, yet the aggression of Amir Khan was considered by the Bengal Government to mean its vigorous interposition. There were grounds for suspecting that his movements were not unconnected with the discontent of the Subahdar of Hyderabad : and although the assertions of his envoys at Nagpur that their masters had been induced to invade the country by the invitation of the Nizam, who had offered to defray the cost of a still more formidable armament, might not be deserving of implicit credit, yet the known sympathies of the parties rendered such a league between them far from improbable. The interests of the British power were, therefore, implicated with those of the Raja of Berar."†

The Nizam, it should be remembered, was merely a puppet in the hands of the Company. That he should have ventured to have taken such a step as that attributed to him in the above passage, without the knowledge or connivance of the British Resident at his court, seems very highly improbable. It appears to us that the Nizam had been inspired by the Europeans at his court to intrigue with, and invite Amir Khan to invade the Raja of Berar's territory, in order first to ruin that Pathan soldier of fortune and secondly to inveigle the Raja of Berar in the scheme of subsidiary alliance. Amir Khan, although in the pay of the British, was an able and intelligent man. He was a tall poppy, and as such, although he had proved of great service to the Europeans, the latter would have been only too delighted to see his downfall and death.

On the other hand, the Raja of Berar, although not a strong prince, was a Maratha and smarting under the insults and injuries he had been subjected to by the British, and thus it was not an impossible or improbable thing for the Raja to conspire against them, since vengeance sleeps long, but never dies. At the time when the war was going to be declared against Holkar, it is alleged that the Raja of Berar was intriguing with Holkar against the British. At that time the Government of India

* This, of course, does not refer to the period when Jaswant Rao Holkar was at war with the British. Even then, Ameer Khan seems to have been in secret understanding with them.

† Vol. VII. p : 216

pressed the Raja to enter into the scheme of subsidiary alliance with them. In the despatch of the Governor-General in Council to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated Fort William, March 24th, 1805, it is stated after mentioning the unwillingness of the Raja to enter into the subsidiary alliance:

"It appeared to be more advisable to leave the Raja to the operation of future events on his mind, and to trust exclusively to the object of obtaining the consent of the Raja to the alliance; with this view, the Resident was directed to refrain from any further agitation of the question. . . .

Reading the above, it is evident that the Europeans must have earnestly prayed for some imminent danger befalling the Raja of Berar which would oblige him to seek their protection. Regarding the anxiety of the Europeans for obtaining the accession of the Raja of Berar to the alliance, it will not be straining one's imagination too much to predict that they must have taken means to bring about such a state of affairs as would threaten his very existence. It was not impossible then for them to have indirectly induced Amir Khan through their puppet, the Nizam, to have attacked the Raja of Berar and then to show their disinterestedness to have come to the rescue of the latter so as to make him believe that they were his true friends. It was no doubt double-dealing, or, to quote the proverb, 'hunting with the hound and running with the hare.' But without double-dealing, without acting on the maxims and suggestions of Machiavelli, it was impossible for the Europeans to obtain power and establish their supremacy in India.

Amir Khan protested against the Company rendering aid to the Raja of Berar. H. H. Wilson writes that Amir Khan,

"appealed with unanswerable justice, although with no avail, to the stipulation of the existing treaty with Holkar on whose behalf he pretended to act, which engaged that the British Government would not in any manner whatever interfere in his affairs; and . . . . . . he argued that the conduct of the Government was a manifest infraction of the treaty, and a breach of the solemn promises made to Jeswant Rao, that it would not meddle with his claims upon the Raja of Berar. These representations were no longer likely to be of any weight."*

The British assembled an army to punish Amir Khan. That Pathan soldier of fortune had no heart or perhaps it did not suit his policy, as he had been in secret understanding with them, to fight. On the approach of the army led by the British officers Amir Khan precipitately retreated from the Raja of Berar's territory. The British also did not pursue him : for,

"Although for a season," writes Wilson,† "it was in contemplation to continue military operations until the complete destruction of Amir Khan's power should have been effected, yet the probability that the prosecution of this policy might lead to a protracted and expensive series of hostilities induced the Governor-General to depart from his original design, and content himself with the accomplishment of the main object of the armament. Their troops were therefore recalled to their several stations in the Company's territories and of those of their allies.§

* VII. 218

† Vii. 220.

§ Lord Minto felt "that an enterprising and ambitious Musalman chief, at the head of a numerous army, irresistible by any power except that of the Company, should not be permitted

There were expeditions against some of the petty chiefs of Bundelkhand and also a little war in Travancore.

Thus, although Minto considered the Indian Empire safe either from the rebellion of the inhabitants of the territories then under the administration of his countrymen or from the aggression of the Maratha princes, there was still apprehension of invasion of India by some foreign power or powers. For the first time in the history of British India, the North-western Frontier assumed an importance which it has ever since maintained in its administration.

Minto's administration is noted for its foreign policy and hence more than a passing allusion should be made to it. But none of the measures of his foreign policy originated with him. He merely carried out and gave effect to what had already been initiated by the Marquess Wellesley.

The king of Afghanistan had, during the administration of Minto, a grand opportunity of invading India. But Marquess Wellesley had taken steps which had the effect of paralysing the energies and attempts on the part of that Afghan sovereign to invade India with any certainty of success. It was no longer now Zaman Shah who ruled the turbulent Afghans : it is certain that had that prince been ruling in Afghanistan at that time he would have made some attempts to take advantage of the critical position of the British in India and invaded it.

The measures which the Marquess Wellesley had initiated in preventing the Afghan sovereign from ever invading India were also given full effect to by Lord Minto. It was Wellesley who sent an embassy to Persia and opened intrigues with the inhabitants of Sindh and the Panjab which were at that time, nominally at least, subject to the King of Kabul. Not very long after his arrival in India, Wellesley directed his attention to checking the movements towards India of the Afghan sovereign. With this object in view he wrote to Jonathan Duncan, at that time Governor of Bombay, a letter dated Fort William, 8th October, 1798, in which he said :

"I concur with you in thinking that the services of the native agent whom you have appointed to reside at Bushire may be usefully employed for the purpose mentioned in that letter ; and as the probability of the invasion of Hindustan by Zeman Shah seems to increase, I am of opinion that Mehdi Ali Khan cannot too soon commence his operations at the court of Baba Khan, ...*It would certainly be a very desirable object to excite such an alarm in that quarter as may either induce the Shah to relinquish his projected expedition, or may recall him should he have actually embarked on it.*"

The words put in italics show how anxious the Governor-General was to prevent Zaman Shah from invading India. He was not content with what the Governor of Bombay had done by sending an agent to Bushire. He sent an embassy to Persia under Malcolm towards the end of the year 1799. In his letter of instructions, dated

to establish his authority, on the ruins of the Raja's dominions, over territories contiguous to those of the Nizam, with whom community of religion, combined with local power and resource, might lead to the formation of projects probably not uncongenial to the mind of the Nizam himself, and certainly consistent with the views and hopes of a powerful party in his court for the subversion of the British alliance." (Minto in India. p. 192).

Fort William, 10th October, 1799, Colonel Kirkpatrick, Military Secretary to Wellesley, wrote to Malcolm :

"At Bombay you will be furnished by the Governor-in-Council with copies of all the correspondence which has passed between him and Mehdi Ali Khan, a native agent employed for some time past by Mr. Duncan, under the instructions of the Governer-General, in opening and conducting a negotiation at the court of Persia with a view to preventing Zemaun Shah from executing his frequently renewed projects against Hindustan."

* * * * *

"You will apprize the court of Persia of your deputation as soon as possible after your arrival, either at Bussorah or at Bagdad, intimating in general terms, that the object of it is to revive the good understanding and friendship which anciently subsisted between the Persian and the British Governments. It is not desirable that you should be more particular with any person who may be sent to meet you, or to ascertain the design of your mission ; but if much pressed on the subject you may signify, that among other things, you have been instructed to endeavour to extend and improve the commercial intercourse between Persia and the British positions in India.

Of course, this was a pure and simple lie, for such was not the real object of the mission. The real object is disclosed in the letter ; for, continued Colonel Kirkpatrick:

"The primary purpose of your mission is to prevent Zemaun Shah from invading Hindustan ; or should he actually invade it, to oblige him, by alarming him for the safety of his own dominions, to relinquish the expedition. The next object of his lordship is to engage the court of Persia to act vigorously and heartily against the French in the event of their attempting at any time to penetrate to India by any route in which it may be practicable for the king of Persia to oppose their progress.

Such was the mission of Malcolm to Persia. He was authorized to conclude a treaty with the king of Persia.

"To engage to prevent Zemaun Shah, by such means as shall be concerted between his Majesty," and Captain Malcolm, "from invading part of Hindustan, and in the event of his crossing the Attock, or of the actual invasion of Hindustan by that prince, the king of Persia to pledge himself to the adoption of such measures as shall be necessary for the purpose of compelling Zemaun Shah to return immediately to the defence of his own dominions."

To play the part of Judas, to betray a prince of his creed and faith, the king of Persia was tempted with a huge bribe.

"The Company (so ran the article of the treaty) to engage to pay to the King of Persia for this service, either an annual fixed subsidy of three lacs of rupees during the period that this treaty shall continue in force, or a proportion, not exceeding one-third, of such extraordinary expense as his Majesty shall at any time actually and *bona fide* incur for the specific purposes stated in the foregoing article."

It was necessary to create distractions in the dominions of the Afghan sovereign. With this object in view, Malcolm was written to :

"In considering the different means by which Zemaun Khan may be kept in check during the period required, you will naturally pay due attention to those which may be derived from the exiled brothers of that prince, now resident in Persia under the protection of Baba Khan. If occasion should offer, you will cultivate a good understanding with those princes, but you are not to contract any positive engagements with them without the specific authority of the Governor-General."

Another instruction to Malcolm ran as follows :

"You will endeavour during your residence at the court of Baba Khan to obtain an accurate

account of the strength and resources of Zemaun Shah, and of his political relations with his different neighbours, and to establish some means of obtaining hereaftar the most correct and speedy information on the subject of his future intentions and movements."

Thus it is clear that the secret of Malcolm's mission to Persia was to intrigue and conspire against Zaman Shah. It must be added that all these intrigues and conspiracies were successful, for these brought about within a short time the downfall of Zaman Shah. In 1801, that is, within less than two years after Malcolm's departure from India for Persia, Afghanistan was the scene of bloodshed and murders and of political revolutions. Zaman Shah, whose name used to inspire terror in the breasts of the English, was no longer the sovereign of the Afghans. He was deposed by his half-brother Mahmud, who put out his eyes and placed him in close confinement in the Bala Hissar at Kabul. He was released by his whole brother Shah Suja, who dethroned Mahmud.

These political revolutions in Afghanistan happening so soon after the embassy of Malcolm to Persia bear a significance which no one possessing the least insight into Occidental statecraft will fail to take proper notice of. It is not straining one's imagination too much to say that the British very dexterously manipulated the affairs of Afghanistan through Persia in a manner which turned out very beneficial to them.

Besides instigating the king of Persia to create distractions in Afghanistan, Malcolm's mission also had in view the engaging of the court of Persia to act in concert with the English against the French. In the letter of instructions to Malcolm from which extracts have been already given above, Colonel Kirkpatrick wrote :

"With respect to the second object of your mission or the engaging of the court of Persia to act eventually against the French, his Lordship deems it unnecessary to furnish you with any detailed instructions. The papers with which you will be furnished, and your own knowledge and reflection will suggest to you all the arguments proper to be used for the purpose of convincing the court of Persia of the deep interest it has in opposing the projects of that nation, and of inducing it to take an active and decisive part against them."

At the time of Wellesley, there was no likelihood of the French intriguing with Persia and of their invading India. But with that Frankophobia which was so characteristic of the Irish Governor-General, he negotiated with the king of Persia to 'oppose the projects of the French which only existed in his imagination. But in the time of Minto, the possibility not so much of French as of Russian designs on India, was fully believed in by the politicians and statesmen of England. From this period, commences that era of Russophobia which has proved a curse to the British rule in India. This has stood in the way of Indian prosperity and good government of the country.

At the time of Minto in India, the British were afraid of the invasion of India by the combined forces of Russia and France through Persia. Previous to Minto's arrival in India, Russia was the friend and ally of England. But, writes Kaye :*

"Russia had ceased to be our friend and ally. She had been fighting for dear life against the growing power of Napoleon, and we had hoped that she would aid us in our efforts to checkmate

* *Lives of Indian Officers,* Vol. I. p. 169.

France in the East. But the peace of Tilsit, as if by magic, changed all this. After the bloody flights of Eylan and Friedland the two armies had fraternised, and the two emperors had embraced each other on a raft floating on the surface of the river Niemen. Among the vast projects of conquest which they then formed was a conjoint campaign *'contre les possessions de la compagnie des Inde'* The territories of the East India Company were to be divided between these two great continental potentates. It was believed that the attack would be made by land rather than by sea, and that Persia would become a basis of operations against the North-Western Province of India. The danger was not an imaginary one. It was the harvest time of great events, and the invasion of India by a mighty European force did not seem to rise above the ordinary level of the current history of the day."

The invasion of India by the combined forces of France and Russia never became an accomplished fact. When however it suited the political expediency of Napoleon, he did not scruple to forge the so-called will of Peter the Great and spread Russophobia among the inhabitants of Great Britain.

The invasion of India by France and Russia was seriously believed in by the ministers of England and so they contemplated despatching an embassy to Persia.*

* Countess Minto, in her work on *Lord Minto in India,* (pp. 98—101) writes :

"At the beginning of 1806, Persia, being engaged in hostilities with Russia, sent an ambassador to Paris to desire the assistance of France. A cordial reception was given him, and it was announced that a splendid mission, having authority to make a treaty of alliance between France and Persia, would be despatched from Paris to Teheran.

"In order to counteract the effect of these proceedings a similar course was adopted by England. An envoy was appointed to Persia, and, with the object of lending greater dignitv and importance to his credentials, it was suggested by the Court of Directors that, while remaining their own paid agent, he should be invested with the character of representative of the Crown. The proposal was acceded to by the ministry of Lord Grenville. There could be little question that Persia was only important to France as a weapon of offence against Great Britain............Sir Harford Jones was appointed to the Persian Mission, to represent the Crown while receiving instructions from the Company........."

"......Sir Harford Jones was directed to proceed in the first instance to St. Petersburg to offer to the Czar the mediation of Great Britain between Russia and Persia.

"The peace and alliance between France and Russia had rendered the failure of this preliminary mission a certainty ; . . . . ."

"In the meanwhile the aspect of affairs was becoming daily graver, as the co-operation of France and Russia in the East grew more probable."

"In January 1808, rumours reached India of the march of a French army under General Menon towards Persia on the way to India while it became known that a great military embassy attended by four-and-twenty French officers and three hundred French soldiers had actually arrived there, giving it out that they were the advanced guard of an army. The first project is believed to be to take possession of a port on the coast of the Persian Gulf, by which they may communicate with the Mauritius, and receive supplies by sea, and from whence they may attempt an invasion of the Western coast of India, and unsettle the minds of the native princes by promises, menaces and intrigue.' "

No one knew better than Lord Minto himself that these rumours were quite baseless. In a secret letter dated Feb. 2, 1808, he wrote :—

"As long as France might be engaged in continental wars in Europe, the project of directing her arms towards this quarter must be considered impracticable ; but if her armies have been liberated by a pacification with Russia and by the continued submission of the Powers of Europe, the advance

Minto on his arrival in India was thinking of sending an ambassador to Persia. It is foreign to our purpose to refer to the friction that arose between the authorities in England and India regarding the choice of the proper person as ambassador to Persia. Minto thought it proper to send an Indian officer as representing the East India Company at the head of the Embassy to Persia.* The officer so selected was

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of a considerable force of French troops into Persia under the acquiesence of the Turkish, Russian and Persian powers. cannot be deemed an undertaking beyond the scope of that energy and perseverance which distinguish the present ruler of France." (*Ibid., p. 101*)

* But Lord Minto seemed to believe in the possibility of French invasion of India through Persia. In continuing the letter from which an extract has been given above, he wrote :

"If one body of troops should succeed in penetrating as far as the Persian dominions, others may be expected to follow ; and it may then be no longer at the option of the Government of Persia to prevent the complete establishment ot the French power and ascendancy in Persia.

"The ascendancy of France being once established in the territories of Persia in the manner described, it may justly be expected that, from that centre of local power, they may be enabled gradually to extend their influence by conciliation on by conquest towards the region of Hindustan, and ultimately open a passage for their troops into the dominion of the Company."

"Arduous as such an undertaking must necessarily be, we are not warranted in deeming it in the present situation of affairs to be altogether chimerical and impracticable under the guidance of a man whose energy and success appear almost commensurate with his ambition. We deem it our duty to act under a supposition of its practicability, and to adopt whatever measures are in our judgement calculated to counteract it even at the hazard of injury to some local and immediate interests."

Again in a private letter he wrote :

"What would have seemed impossible has become scarcely improbable, since we have seen one state after another in Europe, among them those we deemed most stable and secure, fall like a house of cards before the genius of one man."

Lord Minto was a victim of Frankophobia and Russophobia. He was desirous of fighting France and Russia in Persia. So in a letter to Sir George Barlow, he wrote :

"I am strongly of opinion that if this great conflict is to be maintained, we ought to meet it as early and as far beyond our own frontiers as possible. We ought to contest Persia itself with the enemy and to dispute every step of their progress. The force which we can oppose to them in that stage of the contest is indeed much smaller than they would find assembled against them in our own territories ; but in Persia we should have much less to contend with also, and we should meet an enemy much less prepared than he will be if we wait at home till he is ready to face us."

"This system, however, depends on the disposition of Persia herself to neutrality—that is, to let the French and us fight it out fairly between us. For if Persia is determined to support the French with all her power, I acknowledge that we cannot possibly *detach* such a force from our Indian Army as that state of things would require. *At least we could not do so without finding some means to divide Persia and to have allies on our side as well as the French,*" (*Ibid, pp. 107-108*)

The last sentence in the above extract has been put in italics to show the Machiavellian policy which the noble Lord was anxious to adopt in his dealings with Persia. He stood in need of a man who could play on the diplomatic stage of Persia to his satisfaction. In Malcolm he found such a man. To Right Hon. R. Dundas, President of the Board of Control, Lord Minto wrote :

"By Colonel Malcolm, if by any man living, we may hope to detach her from hostile alliance with our enemy, and, if that benefit is no longer attainable, we shall receive from Colonel Malcolm authentic information and judicious advice. If Sir H. Jones should have arrived in Persia, Colonel Malcolm will of course withold his own credentials and diplomatic powers in Persia,. . . ".

Ibid, p. 108.

Malcolm who had once before been sent to Persia by Wellesley. Malcolm was a past master in the art of lying, duplicity and intrigues. He returned from Persia towards the end of the year 1810. In his journal he entered the manner in which, with "deceit, falsehood, and intrigue", his mission to Persia was crowned with success :

"What a happy man I am ! It is impossible to look back without congratulating myself on my good fortune at every stage of my late vexatious and unpromising mission. I have now turned my back, and I hope for ever, on deceit, falsehood and intrigue ; and I am bending my willing steps and still more willing heart towards rectitude, truth and sincerity."*

Malcolm's mission was ostensibly undertaken to make the King of Persia an ally of England against the French and Russians.†

* (*Ibid., p.* 186)

† *To Malcolm Loid Minto wrote a confidential letter of instructions. He wrote :*

"Of these transactions our opposition to France in Persia is the anchor on which our hopes must rest ; for if we permit that country to be the depot of her preparations against us and wait at home till the enemy thinks himself that he is equal to the undertaking, we shall give him a great, and, as it appears to me, a most manifest advantage. . . . . . . "

The letter ends with the confession that "Sir H. Jones is rather a *marplot* (I am writing confidentially) in our play."

Malcolm's instructions were :

"First to detach the court of Persia from the French alliance : and to prevail on that Court to refuse the passage of French troops through the territories subject to Persia, or the admission of French troops into the country. If that cannot be obtained, to admit English troops with a view of oppossing the French Army in its progress to India, to prevent the cession of any maritime port and the establishment of French factories on the coast of Persia."

"Second, to obtain authentic intelligence on all points interesting to the Government. It is scarcely necessary to particularise those points, which will necessarily suggest themselves to the mind of Colonel Malcolm. The principal of them are the real nature and extent of the engagements entered into by France and Persia, and the real disposition of Persia respecting the execution of them. Colonel Malcolm's opinion and advice would also be required by the Government as to the policy to be adopted in either of two contingencies supposed—the active hostility of Persia, or her neutrality."

But Malcolm by his high-handed proceedings in Persia disappointed Lord Minto. In a letter dated July 30th, 1808, Minto wrote to Lieutenant-General Hewitt, the Commander-in-Chief, as follows :

"I am sorry to say in strict confidence that Malcolm has disappointed me exceedingly at the beginning of his mission. . . .

" . . . You will be, I daresay, as much surprised as we have been to learn that the first condition required by Malcolm was the immediate expulsion from Persia of the French embassy with every man of that nation . . . But I am compelled to say that my confidence is entirely shaken by the injudicious course he has pursued, and the disadvantageous ground he has taken. Persia is in the hands of France, and was only to be weaned from that connection by good and convincing reasons urged in a conciliatory form. . . ."

In a letter to Mr. Edmonstone, Lord Minto wrote :

"Malcolm's proceedings at Muscat has been affected with the original sin of his whole system."

In a Minute dated 21st July, 11808, Lord Minto, referring to Malcolm's peremptory demand for the expulsion of the French mission from Persia, wrote :

"The demand cannot be supported on any ground of justice. Persia, as an independent Government, has a right to receive accredited ministers from any other court, and to enter into any

The people of Afghanistan can never entertain love and affection for the natives of England, who have always heaped disasters, miseries and ruin on them. Ever since the days of the Marquess Wellesley, the solution of the problem of maintaining

negotiation she may think advisable. . . . Persia was and continued to be exposed to an invasion from Russia, which is to her a subject of great and reasonable alarm. She first applied to us for assistance. It was impossible for us, consistently with the relations in which we stood to Russia, to afford the aid she asked. She therefore gave us fair notice that, although she would have preferred our co-operation to every other, she was constrained to provide for her safety by looking elsewhere for the aid which she could not obtain from us."

"Upon this ground her connection with France has been formed. . ."

So the mission to Persia was a failure and Malcolm was recalled to India. Countess Minto in her work on Lord Minto in India writes:

"The mission from which so much had been expected had failed. It is possible, even probable, that a more conciliatory course might have enabled him to remain in Persia until a change of circumstances produced a change of sentiments on the part of the Persian Government, when his personal popularity and his conspicuous talents might have restored the prestige of the British name, and enabled him to conduct his negotiations with better effect than Sir Harford Jones but the neglect with which the India Government had treated Persia during the years that had elapsed since Malcolm's first mission, had perhaps a greater share in producing the present disappointment than his somewhat ill-timed arrogance" (pp. 120-121).

After Malcolm returned to India, he had an interview with Lord Minto and was thus able to remove from the mind of the Governor-General much of the misunderstanding regarding the failure of his diplomatic mission to Persia. In a letter to General Hewitt, Commander-in-Chief, Lord Minto wrote:

"I confess I have not seen reason to recall the sentiments I entertained concerning the general policy adopted by him in Persia, but I note with satisfaction that what appears to have been the least prudent and judicious course has proved, as often happens in human affairs, the most useful and advantageous.

"Since success was impossible, it is satisfactory to have arrived at the knowledge of the fact as early as possible, and since moderation and forbearance could have made no difference in the result, it is well that his line of conduct has asserted the power of our country and made manifest our knowledge of the influence under which Persia had adopted so hostile a course."

Sir H. Jones remained in Persia, and he succeeded in negotiating a treaty with the Shah and prevailed on him to send an ambassador to England.

After the conclusion of this treaty, Minto, in a spirit of bravado and to discredit Sir H. Jones and show his own importance as Governor-General of India, sent Malcolm a second time to Persia.

Regarding this affair Countess Minto writes:

"'To despise is to weaken. Reputation is power.'—said an English writer well versed in the knowledge of courts and men. So thinking, Lord Minto asked Colonel Malcolm once more to undertake a mission to Persia. . . . Malcolm and Sir Harford Jones met at last in Persia. To Malcolm were given the honors of the situation by the King, who had a personal regard for him, and created for his special behoof a new order of knighthood, entitled that of the 'Lion and the Sun'."

By the treaty which Sir H. Jones concluded with the Shah, Persia was detached from the sphere of the East India Company's operations; referring to this, Countess Minto writes:

"One of the disadvantages which could not but accrue to the diplomacy of the Company's Government by the withdrawal of Persia from the sphere of its operations, was seen when it appeared that, by an article of the treaty negotiated at Teheran by Sir Harford Jones, it was stipulated that, in case of war between Persia and Afghanistan, '*His Majesty the King of Great Britain should not take any part therein, unless at the desire of both parties*;' while, in ignorance of the existence of

the supremacy and security of the British people in India seemed to have consisted in keeping Afghanistan divided and making it the hot bed of intrigues and disturbances. At that time, nominally at least, subject to the ruler of Kabul were the provinces of Sindh and the Panjab. Wellesley was not content only with sending the embassy to Persia to stir up disturbances in Afghanistan, but also intrigued with the inhabitants of Sindh and the Panjab with the object of their shaking off the rule of the king of Kabul.

Minto sent a mission to Sindh, ostensibly to contract an alliance with the Amirs of that province against the French but in reality against the Afghan sovereign. H. H. Wilson writes :*

"Alarmed by the menaced interference of Shah Suja (the Afghan king) on behalf of the expelled prince, Abd-un-nabi, the Amirs of Sindh had applied to Persia for succour, and a Persian army had been directed to march to their assistance. The death of Abd-un-nabi, and the embarrassments which Shah Suja experienced at home, removed all ground of fear from Afghanistan, and the Amirs became most apprehensive of peril from their allies. They thought it prudent, therefore, to oppose one powerful friend to another,—British India to Persia: they therefore began to conciliate the British Government and sent an agent to Bombay to propose the renewal of the commercial intercourse that had formerly existed. The proposal was favourably entertained, and Captain Seton was sent as envoy to Hyderabad. A treaty of offensive and defensive alliance was concluded by the envoy with the Amirs ; but, as the stipulations pledged the British Government to a reciprocity that was deemed inexpedient, the ratification of the treaty was withheld, and Mr. Nicholas Hankey Smith, a Bombay Civil Servant, was deputed to explain the cause, and to contract a less comprehensive engagement. ......Mr. Smith reached Hyderabad on the 8th of August (1809) ; and on the 23rd of that month a treaty was signed, which engaged that there should be eternal friendship between the two Governments ; that vakeels or agents should be mutually appointed ; and that the French should not be permitted to form an establishment in Sindh."

But as there was no possibility of the French invasion of India ever taking place the real object of the mission to Sindh, as shown in the above extract, was to conclude an alliance with the Amirs against Afghanistan.†

any such agreement, Mr. Elphinstone had been authorised to form a defensive alliance with Afghanistan against an attack from Persia, as was stated in the treaty signed at Calcutta on June 17 of the same year 1809. Yet Persia and Cabul were both necessary members of the Confederacy with which the India Government had proposed to resist an invasion of India."

* (VII. 156)

* In her work, *Lord Minto in India,* Countess Minto writes:—

"The State of Scinde had come within the scope of the defensive arrangements proposed by the British Government, but the indiscretion of their agent, Captain Seton, led to the annulling of the treaty concluded by him with the Ameer of Scinde.

"It was found that Persian agents were negotiating with the Government of Scinde at the same time as the Envoy of the India Government; that they had authority to act for both France and Persia, and that the bait held out to the Government of Scinde was military aid to throw off the yoke of the King of Kabul to whom they owed a nominal allegiance, and the possession of the Afghan fortress of Candahar. 'The chief ruler of Scinde informed Captain Seton distinctly that, despairing of the good will of the British Government, he had intended to close with the offer of the French and Persians, But preferred the British alliance on the same terms.' These terms, agreed to by Captain Seton, were not consistent with the endeavours

Minto also sent envoys to the Panjab and Afghanistan.

The condition of the Panjab had attracted the attention of the Marquess Wellesley. His brother Henry Wellesley, as Resident of Oudh had brought to his notice the distracted condition of that province. Dating his letter, Bareilly, August 5, 1802, Henry Wellesley wrote to the Governor-General :

"Such is the distracted state of the Sikh country, that Mr. Louis (one of General Perron's officers) appears to have obtained possession of a considerable tract of country without the least resistance having been opposed to him. There can be no doubt of General Person's intention to assume as large a portion of the Punjab as he may think himself able to manage, or it may be convenient to him to retain, and it is equally certain that the actual state of that country will render it an easy conquest to anything like a regular force.

"One of the greatest dangers to be apprehended from the establishment of a French force in the Punjab is the means it would afford the French force of extending their conquest down the Indus, and of securing a communication with the sea by means of that river. This would remove every obstacle to their receiving supplies of men and stores from Europe, for there is no British force on that side of India nor are there any native powers, situated at the mouths of the Indus, capable of opposing a regular force with any prospect of success."

The opinion of the military adventurer, George Thomas, as to the case with which the Panjab could be conquered, was also at that time well known. But it was not the policy of the Marquess Wellesley at that time to fight the Sikhs or annex their country. On the contrary, he wanted to cultivate their friendship and raise them into a power as a buffer state against the Afghans on the one hand and the Marathas on the other.

Unfortunately for the Punjab, Ranjit Singh was no statesman. Had he been so, he would have adopted a course different from what he did at this critical period of the history of the British in India. In the Doab, that is the territory between the rivers Satla and Jumno, were a number of petty Sikh chieftains who had been, before second Maratha war, vassals of the Maharajs Sindhia. On the eve of the war with the Marathas towards the end of the year 1803, the English servants of the E. I. Company under the Governor-General's instructions had opened intrigues with these Sikh chieftains.

making to secure the friendship of the king of Cabul; hence the India Government repudiated the engagements made by captain Seton, and sent another Envoy (Mr. H. Smith) to Scinde, to renew the negotiations with that Government on the footing on which alone Captain Seton had been empowered to treat—namely, the admission, as a preliminary step to all further transactions, of a resident agent of the British Government (the commercial resident having been expelled in 1802).

"This measure is necessarily preliminary to the accomplishment of our ultimate purpose, that of withholding or detaching the Government of Scinde from connections with our enemies, as well as the more proximate purpose of securing an authentic channel of information and intelligence on points of the utmost importance to our interests. 'No specific engagement could be entered into with that government without the establishment of direct intercourse on a permanent footing,' 'the attainment of which will afford the means of watching its proceedings and obtaining authentic intelligence concerning the designs of our enemies.' (Secret and separate general letter)." (Pp. 177-178.)

Those chieftains did not render assistance to the Marathas and thus played into the hands of the British. In return for what they had done for the English these Sikh chieftains expected their sympathy and active co-operation in their troubles.

Had Ranjit been a far-seeing statesman he would have formed a confederacy with them and welded all these states into an United Sikh Empire. But on the contrary he was bent on their destruction. At first, to curry favour with the British, he proposed to betray and sell these chieftains of his race and creed to them. But when he found no favourable response from the latter to his proposal, he wanted to seduce all these chieftains and confiscate their properties and estates. To effect these he set out from Lahore and crossed the Satlaj. The chieftains of the Doab were naturally alarmed and they appealed to the British Government for help against Ranjit Singh. The Governor-General seemed to have been at first inclined to leave these chieftains to the tender mercies of Ranjit. In the second Maratha war, these Sikh chieftains had been as much useful to the British as the princes of Rajputana, but the British did not scruple to exhibit their bad faith towards the Rajput princes, as already narrated before. The Sikh chieftains would not have fared better than the Rajput princes but for the circumstances to be presently mentioned.

The Sikh chieftains of the Doab, as said before, appealed for help to the British Government, and in order to alarm Ranjit Singh and make him return to Lahore, they industriously circulated a report that their application had been favourably considered. H. H. Wilson writes:

"In order to discover the truth of this assertion, Ranjit addressed a letter to the Governor-General, stating that he had learned that troops were assembling at Jumna, and requesting to be informed of the cause. He declared his wish to continue on friendly terms, but ventured to add, "The country on this side of the Jumna, except the stations occupied by the English is subject to my authority. Let it remain so."

"Although Lord Minto was resolved to resist the pretentions of Ranjit Singh to the exercise of any authority on the right bank of the Jumna, yet the policy of securing his concurrence in the scheme of defensive alliance which it was sought to frame against the hostile designs upon India avowed by the Emperor Napoleon, suspended the announcement of the Governor-General's sentiments; and Ranjit was referred for a reply to Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Metcalfe, whom it had been determined to send on a friendly mission to the Sikh ruler."*

Metcalfe was a civilian and as such came out to India while yet in his teens. He received his initiation into the art of Machiavellian diplomacy under the Marquess Wellesley, and consequently he was always indebted to that Irish Governor-General for the interest the latter took in him. Metcalfe acted for some time as Governor-General of India. It was in that capacity that he wrote a letter to his patron, the Marquess Wellesley, dated Dec. 23, 1834. As this letter sheds much side-light on his character, it is reproduced below:

"My Lord,—Few things in life have given me greater pleasure than the receipt of your Lordship's kind letter delivered by Lieut. Campbell. It is now within a few days of thirty-four years since I had the honour of being presented to you. You were then Governor-General of India, and I was a boy of fifteen entering on my career; I shall never forget the kindness with which you

* VII. pp 140-141.

treated me from first to last during your stay in India; nor the honor and happiness which I enjoyed in being for a considerable period a member of your family. So much depends on the first turns given to a man's course, that I have a right to attribute all of good that has since happened to me, to the countenance and favor with which you distinguished me at that early period. *My public principles were learned in your school, pre-eminently the school of honor, zeal, public spirit, and patriotism;* and to my adherence to the principles their acquired I venture to ascribe all the success that has attended me."

The words put in italics in the above, clearly show what policy Metcalfe would have adopted in India towards the native States had he been appointed as its Governor-General. That he considered the school of Wellesley "the school of honor" is more than what we can understand, since that Irish Governor-General lacked all principles of honor and honesty. The secret and official letter which the Marquess Wellesley wrote to General Lake on the 2nd August, 1803, regarding the Sikh states and Ranjit Singh, was examined and despatched by Metcalfe. Hence he was quite familiar with the views which the Marquess Wellesley entertained towards Ranjit Singh. It is probable that on this account, he was chosen as ambassador to the Court of Ranjit Singh.*

* That Metcalfe was closen as an envoy to Ranjit was due to the fact that he was a jingoist. Although a civilian, he loved war more than peace. Countess Minto in her work *Lord Minto in India*, (pp. 97-98), writes:

"The position of England relatively to Europe after the peace of Tilsit (June 1807) is thus commented on in a letter from a young Englishman in India to a friend: 'What an unexampled and surprising picture the state of Europe now presents; France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, Germany, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Italy, Turkey—all Europe, save little Sweden, combined against our country. We may truly call ourselves "*divisos orbe Britannos.*" Although this is a state of things which no one could ever have wished to see, I confess that I feel a pride in it . . . I hope that we shall do as well as possible under such strange circumstances."

* * * * *

"We have at different times paid Austria, Prussia, France, and Germany; we preserved to Turkey a great portion of its Empire, driving out its enemies, the French; we have constantly fought the battles of Europe against France; and all powers are now ranged on the side of France against us. Hurrah for the tight little Island!"

Countess Minto continues:

"We should hardly have ventured to quote so glaring a specimen of a spirit described in the slang of the present day as Jingoism—the English language having apparently no term of reprobation for it—had the writer borne a name less known and honoured than that of Metcalfe."

"It was, however, the sort of spirit which, combined with conspicious ability and strong character, had attracted the attention of Lord Wellesley, who when Metcalfe was only nineteen, sent him in a political capacity to the camp of Lord Lake; and which in this year 1808, marked him out in the judgment of Lord Minto for a still more important mission . . . .

The importance of the Punjab and Afghanistan, through which countries the French and the Russians must pass in their contemplated invasion of India, was fully recognized by Minto and hence contracting alliance with them, (or if necessary, bringing their territories under the control of the East India Company), was considered expedient. In a minute dated 15th September 1808, he remarked that "even should France succeed in establishing an ascendancy in Persia, much would remain to be accomplished before India could be successfully invaded, and the hostility of the interjacent states, specially if seconded by the co-operation of the British power, might yet be expected to frustrate the design, or at least to reduce the invading army to a degree of debility

At that time, Metcalfe was Political Assistant at Delhi. So he set out from Delhi towards the end of August, 1808, and crossed the Satlaj on the 1st of September, and reached the camp of Ranjit Singh at Kasur on the 11th. On the

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which would give the troops of the Government of India a decided superiority in the field." Hence the necessity of establishing a direct communication with those states was evident.

In a letter to the President of the Board of Control, dated 10th February, 1808, Lord Minto wrote :

"If the views of the enemy should extend to the direct invasion of India by an army proportioned to that undertaking, their march must probably be to the Indus, and must lead through the kingdom of Cabul and the territories of Lahore, ... It has appeared to be extremely desirable to push forward a British agency as far beyond our own frontiers, and as near the countries from which the enemy is to take his departure, as possible. We have not, till of late, had much inducement to frequent or to make much enquiry concerning the countries beyond the Indus ; and there are difficulties attending the usual means of establishing an amicable intercourse with those governments or their subjects. We cannot safely rely on the fidelity or discernment of native agents, either for furnishing information or accomplishing any political objects our interests might require. I understand that the employment of Europeans in such services would be subject to great difficulties. Regular and avowed embassies, which would furnish occassion to the fixed residence, during periods like the present, of Europeans qualified in those countries, would undoubtedly be best calculated to fulfil my present views, which aim, first at obtaining early intelligence of the enemy's designs and secondly at casting obstacles to his progress."

Lord Minto entertained hostile designs against Ranjit Singh. His selection of Metcalfe was also with that object in view. He wanted some pretext and sought means to provoke Ranjit Singh to hostilities. In his despatch to the Secret Committee of March 1808, he wrote :

"Although as a general principle we cordially recognize the wisdom and the justice of abstaining from all interference in the contests, disputes, and concerns of states with which we are unconnected by the obligations of alliance, and are fully convinced of the embarrassments and inconveniences of extending our protection to petty chieftains, who are unable to protect their territories from the aggressions of more powerful neighbours, yet we are disposed to think that cases may occur in which a temporary deviation from these general principles may be a measure of defensive policy, the neglect of which might be productive of much more danger and embarrassment than the prosecution of it, and that the certain resolution of the Rajah of Lahore to subjugate the states situated between the Sutledge and the frontier of our dominion would, under other circumstances than the present, constitute a case on which, on grounds of self-defence, the interposition of the British Power for the purpose of preventing the execution of such a project, would be equally just and prudent. Yet the accomplishment of the more important views already described seems evidently incompatible with a rupture with him :

Again in another minute dated June 1808, he wrote :

"It is well known that the habitual and undistinguishing jealousy which is the personal character of Ranjit Singh, has been directed specifically against the British Government. He is aware that our interests and principles are unfavourable to some of the chief objects of his ambition ; and, in addition to this particular cause of distrust, means have been found to create in his mind a still stronger jealousy amounting almost to personal apprehension."

"It is certain that our endeavours to open a communication with Cabul, and to establish intimate relations with that state, will furnish abundant matter of uneasiness, and supply fresh food to the jealousy entertained by Ranjit Singh, both of Cabul and of our Government."

So Metcalfe was sent to woo the Raja ; but should the Sikh sovereign resist the overtures of the Christian Envoy, means had been prepared to annihilate him. Countess Minto in her work on *Lord Minto in India"* writes :—(p. 154)

next day, the Sikh prince granted an interview to the British Envoy. "The first visits of oriental diplomacy," writes Kaye, 'are visits of courtesy and congratulation. It is a kind of diplomatic measuring of swords before the conflict commences."

Metcalfe was received by Ranjit Singh with great cordiality and courtesy.*

On the 16th, Ranjit Singh returned the visit of the English diplomat. It was on the 22nd that negotiations were formally opened. Ranjit was told that the French had designs on Afghanistan and the Panjab and that he ought to enter into an alliance with the English.

Metcalfe wrote to the Governor-General that

"In the course of this conversation, I endeavoured, in conformity to the instructions of the Supreme Government, to alarm the Raja for the safety of his territories, and at the same time to give him confidence in our protection."†

In non-diplomatic language it means that he told a pack of lies to Ranjit Singh.

Ranjit Singh was not going to be so easily outwitted by the Christian diplomat. He asked Metcalfe whether the British Government would recognize his sovereignty over all the Sikh states on both sides of the Sutlaj. But Metcalfe only replied that he had no authority to express the views of his Government on this subject. At this reply, Ranjit was much disgusted, and illiterate and wanting in manners as he was, his behavior towards the foreign envoy appeared hardly cordial or friendly. To show his defiance towards the English, he invaded the Doab and exacted tribute from some of the petty chieftains. All the while Metcalfe still remained at his court as the accredited agent of the English.

In the meanwhile the danger of the so-called French invasion of India altogether disappeared and so the Governor-General was not very anxious to contract a friendly alliance with Ranjit Singh. Moreover, it would seem that the Envoy having espied out the country and the weakness of the military organisation of the Sikhs, the exaggerated notion of Ranjit's resources appeared to be a myth to him. Hence the Governor-General and his agent did not consider it necessary to any longer temporise with Ranjit Singh. On the 22nd December, 1808, Metcalfe personally communicated to Ranjit the intentions of the Government of India, that the territories between the Saltaj and the Jumna were under British protection, and that he might retain such acquisitions as he had made on this side of the Satlaj previously to the existence of the relations which had been formed with the protected states, but that he must restore all that had been

"The Commander-in-chief received orders to prepare for an advance, and a private letter to him from Lord Minto shows that in the event of serious resistance from Runjit, it was in the contemplation of Government to substitute a friendly for a hostile power between our frontier and the Indus. There is reason to believe that a considerable portion of the country usurped by Runjit Singh is strongly disaffected, and should any grand affort be made, and be crowned with success, nothing would be more advantageous to our interests than the substitution of friends and dependants for hostile and rival powers throughout the country between our frontier and the Indus."

* Kaye's *Lives of Indian Officers*, Vol. 1, p. 393.

† *Ibid.*, p. 394.

made subsequently; and that in order to guard against any future encroachments, a military post would be established on the left bank of the river.*

When these communications were made to Ranjit Singh, he was furious; to quote the words of Kaye†

"He left the room, descended to the court-yard below, mounted a horse, and began caracolling about with what the young English envoy described as 'surprising levity.' But it was not levity. He was striving to subdue his strong feelings, and was gaining time to consider the answer he was to give to the British Envoy. After a while he returned to another room and took counsel with his ministers, ...

"On the same evening he sent a message to Metcalfe saying that the proposal of the British Government to send troops to the Sultaj was of so strange a character that he could not finally announce his determination till he had consulted with his chiefs, and that he proposed to proceed for that purpose to Amritsar, and he requested the British Envoy to attend him."*

But the English Government did not communicate its intention to Ranjit Singh without making a show of military operations. In the middle of January 1809, a detachment under Colonel Ochterlony crossed the Jumna and proceeded to Ludhiana, whilst an army of reserve under the command of Major-General St. Leger was prepared to support the advance, should protracted operations become necessary. The troops of Ranjit Singh fell back as Colonel Ochterlony's detachment approached.

Ranjit Singh was sorely irritated, and how he must have cursed himself for not affording aid to the Marathas in their struggle with the English, with whom at times he thought of trying conclusions! But an incident occurred which is said to have damped Ranjit's courage, and convinced him of his inability to successfully fight the English.

During the month of February, 1809, when Metcalfe was in Amritsar, the anniversary of the Muharram occurred, which the Shia Muhammadans of his escort celebrated, as usual, with public demonstrations of passionate sorrow and religious fervour. Since the ascendancy of the power of the Sikhs this celebration of the Muharram had been stopped and so the conduct and behavior of Metcalfe's escort gave great offence to the population of Amritsar, a place which is sacred to all Sikhs The Akalis, a sect of Sikh fanatics, who are half soldiers and half saints, attacked the camp of Metcalfe. A little tact and ordinary courtesy would have dictated that Christian Envoy not to have allowed the Shia Muhammadans of his escort to celebrate the Muharram in the

* These Sikh Chieftains were not now to be treated as allies but as dependants of the British Government, for they had to enter into an agreement by which their states were to be escheated and taken charge of by the British on failure of their heirs; the privilege of adoption was denied to them. It was in this manner the principalities of Amballa. Kaithal and several other trans-Saltaj Sikh states came into the possession of the British. Lord Dalhousie vigorously acted upon the policy which was first of all initiated by Lord Minto, who like himself was a native of Scotland.

Baron Hugel (Travels, p. 279) attributes the interference of the English to selfishness, the motive being the desire of benefiting by escheats, which the dissipated character of the chiefs was likely to render speedy and numerous.

† Lives of Indian Officers.

* *Ibid*, p. 396.

sacred city of the Sikhs without the special permission of Ranjit Singh. Of course, the Akalis were fanatics and were no match for the trained soldiers of Metcalfe's escort. The steady disclipline of the latter prevailed and the Akalis broke and fled. Ranjit Singh came up at the close of the affray and assisted in quelling the tumult. Metcalfe's camp was removed to a greater distance from the town.

This incident is said by the British writers to have made a great impression on Ranjit's mind. Kaye writes that Ranjit

"Saw clearly that the English, who could make such good soldiers of men not naturally warlike, were a people not to be despised."*

How much truth there is in this assertion, it is impossible to say, for the incident above referred to, rests solely on the authority of the Christian Envoy and Christian writers, whose testimony could hardly be relied upon, since they are the interested party in the affair. This incident occurred in February and from the fact that the English did not demand any satisfaction from Ranjit Singh for his subjects attacking the escort of a friendly foreign mission, and also when we remember the fact that Ranjit Singh did not at once, after its occurrence, conclude a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance with the British, it appears to us that this incident did not influence the conduct of Ranjit towards the English.†

The British Government in order to carry on the negotiations to a satisfactory termination, had moved the troops and threatened Ranjit with hostilities. But as waging war against the princes of India was strictly forbidden by the authorities in England, it does not appear that Minto was serious as to going to war with the Sikh Prince. The negotiations dragged on from month's end to month's end till the 25th April, 1809, when a treaty was concluded which placed all the petty Sikh chieftains in the territory between the rivers Satlaj and Jamna under the protection of the British.** But Ranjit Singh, illiterate and lacking in the foresight and forethought of a gifted statesman, imagined that he had his compensation for the sacrifices which he had made in gaining the

* *Ibid.*, p. 397.

† In the history of the Sikhs, Captain Cunningham does not allude to this incident having influenced his conduct towards the English. In a footnote (page 138 2nd edition) he writes :

"Moorcroft ascertained that Ranjit Singh had serious thoughts of appealing to the sword, so unpalatable was English interference. The well-known Fukeer Uzeez-ood-deen was one of the two persons who dissuaded him from war."

** Captain Cunningham writes :

"In the beginning of February 1809 Sir David Ochterlony had issued a proclamation declaring the Cis-Sutledge states to be under British protection, and that any aggressions of the chief of Lahore would be resisted with arms. Ranjit Singh then perceived that the British authorities were in earnest, and the fear struck him that the still independent leaders of the Punjab might likewise tender their allegiance and have it accepted. All chance of empire would thus be lost and he prudently made up his mind without further delay. He withdrew his troops as required, he relinquished his last acquisitions and at Amritsar, on the 25th April 1809, the now single chief of Lahore signed a treaty which left him the master of the tracts he had originally occupied to the south of Sutledge, but confined his ambition for the future to the north and westward of that river."

friendship of the English and currying favor with them by the latter allowing him a free hand over the territorries and peoples to the North and West of the Satlaj. By this clause of the treaty it was to be clearly understood that Ranjit Singh was to invade the dominions of the King of Kabul. There was not much love lost between the Sikhs and the Afghans and this treaty was meant to widen the differences between those two peoples. This treaty served to make Ranjit Singh the catspaw of the British for their ulterior purposes and render the Panjab the buffer state against the Afghan monarch and the threatened invasion of India by the combined forces of France and Russia through Central Asia. It was on this account that Elphinstone's embassy to Peshwar, to which reference will be presently made, did not conclude any definite treaty with the Afghan monarch.

The mission to Afghanistan was entrusted to Elphinstone. It was feared that the combined forces of France and Russia would invade India through Afghanistan; and therefore it was considered necessary to despatch an embassy to the King of Kabul* Shah Suja was the reigning monarch at that time at Kabul. The diplomatic mission of Elphinstone consisted in endeavouring to rouse Shah Suja's fears for his own safety and to play him off against Persia. It was not the policy of the British Government to enter into any alliance with the Afghan monarch, although Elphinstone was at the same time told that "should the contracting of these engagements be absolutely required by the king the eventual aid to be afforded by us ought to be limited to supplies of arms, ordinance, military stores, rather than troops."

The mission did not pass through the Panjab. Perhaps at this time the British Government feared that Ranjit Singh would not allow passage to the mission. As said before Ranjit kept neutral while the Marathas were struggling with the English for their independence and their country. Ranjit again, did not object to the British troops under Lake penetrating to the heart of the Panjab in pursuit of Holkar. For concluding an offensive and defensive alliance with the English, Ranjit was even willing to betray the chieftains of his creed occupying the tract of the country between the Satlaj and the Jamna. But all his labors and sacrifices for the sake of the British had been in vain. He had never derived any benefit so far from them and was naturally much disappointed. So it appears that the British Government of India, at this time, had no face to ask for a further favor from Ranjit to allow the mission to pass through the Panjab to the court of the ruler of Afghanistan. Consequently the mission proceeded by the route of Bikanir, Bhahwulpur and Multan, and reached Peshwar on the 25th of February, 1809.†

* Countess Minto in her work on Lord Minto in India writes:

"We are informed that papers exist to prove that Bonaparte had fixed on the Gomul Pass, leading from Guznee to Dera Ismael Khan, as the line of his advance from Afghanistan into India." (p. 163. f. n.)

† After reaching Multan the mission were detained for some time while communications were carried on by letter with the king of Cabul. For without his consent and the protection of a guard from His Majesty, it was impossible to travel among the tribes beyond the Indus. The answer to Mr. Elphinstone's application was long in coming, for, as they afterwards learned, the news of the

At that time the tract of the country through which Elpinstone proceeded to Afghanistan was a *terra incognita* to the British Government of India. It would seem that the object of the mission was as much to gather information regarding the country, as to espy out the resources of the Afghan monarch. Afghanistan was at this period the scene of unhappy internal dissensions and its ruler a victim of domestic feuds. Shah Suja granted an interview to Elphinstone on the 5th of March, 1809. He showed great courtesy and hospitality to the mission and as he was given to understand that the British Government was desirous of entering into a friendly alliance with him, he naturally expected help and co-operation from the mission in extricating him from his domestic troubles. But in this he was dissappointed. Kaye writes that Shah Suja

"was distracted by domestic cares. He had a dangerous revolution to cope with in his own kingdom. He did not wish the British Mission to proceed any further into the heart of his dominions, which were in a distracted state; indeed, the best advice he could give to the English gentlemen was, that they should go home as fast as they could, unless they were inclined to help him against his enemies. When a man's own house is on fire it is no time to alarm him on the score of remote dangers and he soon found that the British Government would not help him to extinguish these domestic flames."

Poor deluded Shah Suja! Had he known that it was the British Government which was at the bottom in enkindling these domestic flames, for it was the interest of that Government to do so, and for the avowed object of which it had sent an embassy to Persia and paid a subsidy in money to the Persian Government, he would not have expected the British Government to help him to extinguish these domestic flames.

To quote Kaye again:

"The Afghan Ministers, it must be admitted, argued the case acutely and not without some amount of fairness. They could not see why, if the English wished the King of Cabul to help them against their enemies, they should not in their turn help the King to resist his; but as it was they said all the advantage was on our side, and all the danger on the side of the King. 'They stated,' wrote Mr. Elphinstone in a letter to Lord Minto that an alliance for the purpose of repelling our enemy was imperfect and the true friendship between two states could only be maintained by identifying their interests in all cases; that Shah Mahmud had no influence over the Douranees and would be obliged—if he obtained the crown—to put himself under the protection of the Persians to maintain his authority; *that he had before connection with that people and was naturally inclined at them; and that from the moment of his restoration to the Government of this country we might consider the French and Persians as already on the Indus.*"*

The importance of the words put in italics will be easily understood when the fact is remembered that Malcolm was sent in 1799 to Persia by the Marquess Wellesley to instigate the king to create distraction. As said before, a subsidy even was paid to

approach of the mission was at first regarded with strong prejudice and distrust; the Afghan nobles disliked the idea of an alliance between the king and the British power, as likely to strengthen him to their detriment; and the king himself thought it very natural that the British should seek to profit by the internal dissensions of a neighbouring kingdom, and endeavour to annex it to their empire. Curiosity is said to have had much to do with the final decision to receive the mission at Peshawar. —*Minto in India*, pp. 161-162.

* *Ibid.*, pp. 241-242

The Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone

Sir John Malcolm

Old Bombay

the Persian King to carry out this atrocious piece of business. The object of the British Government was gained, for Shah Mahmud with the help of the Persians raised the standard of revolt in Afghanistan, seized the Afghan monarch Zaman Shah, deposed him, put out his eyes and placed him in close confinement in the Bala Hissar at Kabul But Shah Mahmud did not retain his ill-gotten power very long. He was, dethroned by Shah Suja in 1803.

So the deposition and blindness of Zaman Shah relieved the British Government of the incubus of the invasion of India with which the Afghan monarch had threatened them so often. The domestic dissensions and internecine feuds in Afghanistan, brought about through the instrumentality of the Persian King prevented the successor of Zaman Shah from ever carrying out his threat into execution.*

To keep Persia and Afghanistan always at war with one another and never allow them to unite and make a common cause seemed to have been the object of Elphinstone's mission. As said before, Malcolm had succeeded in playing off Persia against Afghanistan and now Elphinstone was trying to pit the Afghan ruler against the Persian monarch. But no treaty of any definite character was concluded with the Afghan sovereign to instigate him to invade or create distractions in the territory of Persia. There are two reasons to be assigned for the English refraining from any assistance to the Afghan ruler in extinguishing his domestic flames. The first reason was that they did not want to have a prosperous and happy Afghanistan ruled over by Shah Suja, the brother of Zaman Shah, who had so often threatened them with the invasion of India : they were afraid that Shah Suja might carry into execution the often repeated threat of his brother and invade India, if his subjects in Alghanistan were happy and contented and did not rise in revolt against their ruler. The second reason which influenced the English in refusing to contract a defensive alliance with

* "Two years before Malcolm went to Persia, a Persian nobleman naturalised in India, named Medhi Ali Khan, had been sent to Teheran by the Governor of Bombay, with instructions to take measures for inducing the Court of Persia to keep Shah Zemaun in perpetual check (so as to preclude him from returning to India), but without any decided act of hostility.' What Mehdi Ali Khan did in Persia, is described by Lieut.-Colonel P. M. Sykes, in his History of Persia (Vol. II. p. 397) as follows :

"Mehdi Ali Khan, a skilful diplomatist of the Persian school, had written letters from Bushire to the Court at Teheran in which he excited the indignation of the Shah by an account of atrocities committed by the Sunni Afghans on the Shias of Lahore, thousands of whom, he declared, had fled for refuge to the territories ruled by the East India Company, and at the same time urged that if Zemaun Shah were checked a service would be rendered to God and man. He stated, furthermore, that the Governor-General did not at all apprehend an Afghan invasion of Hindustan, because the fame of the English artillery was well known. As an example of what English troops could do he asserted that seven hundred of these brave soldiers had defeated the army of Suraj-ud-Daula, numbering three hundred thousand men."

"In the autumn of 1799 Mehdi Ali Khan was received in person by the Shah. Spending large sums in presents, he succeeded in persuading the Persian monarch to continue hostilities against Afghanistan and he then returned to Bushire where he met Captain Malcolm, who had recently landed on his first memorable mission."

the Afghan ruler is to be found in the fact that they had to compensate Ranjit Singh for his renouncing all claims over the chieftains of the Doab, by giving him a free hand in conquering territories to the North and West of the river Indus. Had they formed an alliance with Shah Suja, there would have been no chance for Ranjit Singh to extend his dominions. They knew that the Sikh prince—whom they were wont to call the Lion of the Panjab—although no statesman. was an ambitious, capable and skilful general. He could have given them much trouble had he any inclination of doing so, Moreover, Ranjit had, on two previous occasions, obliged them first by his remaining neutral and not rendering any aid to the Marathas in their struggle with the English, and secondly, by his permitting the troops under Lake to penetrate into the Panjab in pursuit of Holkar.

It would not have done, therefore, to have contracted a defensive alliance with Shah Suja and restricted the ambitious schemes of Ranjit. Moreover, as a French writer has said, the English encouraged the Sikh prince to invade the territories of the Afghan monarch for they knew that on the death of Ranjit the Panjab as well as his conquests in the Afghan territory would pass into their hands.

Even so early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Afghans seem to have been acquainted with "*Perfide Albion*" Regarding the conversation with Mulla Jafar, an Afghan minister, Elphinstone writes :

> "He said that he did not believe that we intended to impose upon the king, but he did not think that we were so plain as we pretended to be. . . . He frankly owned that we had the character of being very designing and that most people thought it necessary to be very vigilant in all transactions with us."*

The English were secretly glad at the disturbed condition of Afghanistan. Elphinstone espied out the resources of the country and, according to Kaye, Elphinstone

> "had indeed done all that it was requisite to do ; for the dangers which he had been sent to anticipate had disappeared by themselves. The king of Cabul undertook to prevent the passage of the French and Persians through his kingdom, and the English undertook to provide money for the purpose."†

Elphinstone and his party returned to India through the Panjab. Of course, there was no objection on the part of Ranjit to grant them the passage through his country, for he had now entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with them.

Thus then Lord Minto's Government took every precaution to preserve the supremacy of the British influence in India, and duly safeguarded themselves against the rising of the inhabitants of the territories at that time under the administration of the English, as well as protected India against the native powers of Hindustan. For the first time in the history of British India, the fear of the invasion of India from its North-Western frontier seized the minds of the Christian rulers and hence the various missions were sent to the Panjab, Afghanistan, Sindh and Persia, not only to contract defensive alliance with the rulers of those countries but also to espy out the military resources and strategical positions of those states.

* *Ibid.*, p. 244, f. n.

† *Ibid.*, p. 247.

But the British still apprehended danger from the sea. It was not impossible for any maritime power to invade their possessions in India by sea and so it appeared necessary for Lord Minto's Government to reduce such places as might serve as bases of operations for any maritime nation hostilely inclined against British supremacy in India. The influence of sea-power was fully recognized by them, but at this time there was not the remotest chance for any nation to approach the shores of India and invade the country by the sea. The danger was apprehended from France, but at this time the French navy was almost a thing of the past and hence Napoleon tried to conquer the sea by land. But this naval weakness of France gave the opportunity to the English to attack and capture their colonies in different parts of the world. Napoleon's schemes of conquest of the different countries of Europe necessarily left the French colonies unguarded by the French fleet and so the British Government made elaborate preparations for their invasion.

The French possessions in the Indian Ocean, *viz.*, the Isle of France, Bourbon and Rodniguez, were always considered as sources of danger to the British Government in India, since these islands harboured asylums to pirates who inflicted serious damage upon the Company's commerce. These islands were also looked upon as the bases of operations against the British possessions in India in the event of the outbreak of hostilities between the French and the English. Tipu was alleged to have sent his agents to the Isle of France for the purpose of enlisting French recruits in his army to fight the English.

The reduction of these French possessions was considered to be of great political importance by the authorities both in England and India, and Marquess Wellesley had at one time seriously thought of sending expeditions against them. But the low state of finances did not allow him to carry out his intention into execution, as any expedition against the islands would involve great expense both for their reduction and maintenance. But in 1809, the British Government at home authorized Minto to attempt a rigorous blockade of the French Islands in the Indian Ocean. It will be foreign to our purpose to describe in detail the methods which were adopted to execute this order, which finally led to the capture and annexation of those French colonies in 1810. Suffice it to say that India had to bear the expenses of the expedition. By the reduction of these islands, the energies of the naval power of France in the East were paralysed once for all, and the French incubus no longer disturbed the sleep of the rulers of British India.

The attention of the authorities in England was also drawn to the Dutch possessions in the East.

Accordingly under instructions from the home authorities, Minto fitted out an expedition to reduce them. By the end of 1811 all the Dutch possessions in the Indian Archipelago came under the rule of the British Government.

After the termination of the expedition against the Dutch possessions in the East, Minto was recalled and he left India in 1813.

The authoress of "*Lord Minto in India*" (*pp.* 343-344) writes :

"Lord Minto had intimated to the Directors his wish to be relieved from the government early

in 1814. The day he had named as that of his departure from India was indeed January, 1. In the summer of 1813 he learned that, six months before, it had been decided to supersede him in the government of India, and that the appointment had been bestowed on the Earl of Moira, to whom the Prince Regent conceived himself peculiarly indebted for the assistance rendered by him while a new ministry was in process of formation after Mr. Perceval's death. . . .Nothing could be more undeserved, more ungracious, or more discreditable to the parties concerned, than the recall of an able and uniformly successful Governor-General to make room for a personal friend of the Regent's."

During his administration of six years, Minto did not extend the boundaries of the British possessions in India either by means of force or fraud. But he preserved the Empire by means which are Machiavellian and for which the natives of England ought always to be grateful to him. He came out to India at a period when the military prestige of the British was at its lowest ebb and when their public credit was shaken. It was the most critical period for them in India. To have preserved the ship of the state in such a stormy weather is a strong testimony to his ability and talents. He safeguarded the interests of his country by taking steps which had the effect of preventing insurrections in and foreign invasions of India. The methods which he adopted have already been mentioned : and if the end justifies the means, then Minto must be pronounced to have been a very successful administrator from the point of view of the British people.

CHAPTER LXIII

THE MUTINY AT MADRAS

The Mutiny at Vellore produced great sensation in England. There is little doubt now that it was caused by the belief then prevalent that the authorities in India, especially in Madras, were bent on converting the natives of this country to Christianity, Lord William Bentinck, as Governor of Madras, gave every encouragement to the Christian missionaries to carry on their proselytising propaganda in India. It was, therefore, necessary to remove the impression from the minds of the people then under the administration of the East India Company that the authorities meant to interfere with their religious customs and observances. Great credit is due to Minto for doing everything in his power to discourage the invasion of India by Christian missionaries. In his letter to the Chairman of the East India Company, dated September 1807, he wrote :

"The only successful engine of sedition in any part of India must be that of persuading the people that our Government entertains hostile and systematic designs against their religion."*

The Serampore Mission, headed by Dr. Carey. printed many books in the vernaculars. Lady Minto in her work on Lord Minto in India writes:

"Soon after Lord Minto's arrival, some of these publications attracted the attention of Government and it being undeniable that they were calculated to offend the feelings of the native population, containing as they did offensive attacks on the Hindu mythology, and the Mussulman Prophet, the Secretary to Government received instructions to communicate to the Revd. Dr. Carey, the leading member of the mission at Serampore, a resolution arrived at by the Governor-General in Council to place their press under regulation, and to suspend the practice of public preaching by the natives in the native dialects at the seat of Government.

"In an official letter addressed by Mr. Edmonstone to Dr. Carey it was stated that 'the issue of publications and the pubiic delivery of discourses of the nature above alluded to, are evidently calculated to produce consequences in the highest degree detrimental to the tranquility of the British dominions in India, and it becomes the indispensable duty of the British Government to arrest the progress of any proceedings of that nature. In the present instance this objection is enforced by the necessity of maintaining the public faith, which under the express injunctions of the Legislature has been repeatedly pledged to leave the native subjects of the Company in India to the full, free, and undisturbed exercise of their respective religions."†

The natives of India set more store by their religions than by anything else. Thus they were easily conciliated to the Company's Government by the attitude which Lord Minto manifested towards the Christian missionaries.

But the case was quite different with Minto's co-religionists and compatriots in India, who came out to this country as "birds of prey and passage," to shake the pagoda tree, amass "filthy lucre", and then return home laden with their booty to

* *Minto in India,* p. 62.

† (*Ibid.,* p. 65).

play "the Nabob" there. Anything which touched their pockets made them indignant and turn against those who ventured to do it.

The financial crisis of the Government of India at the period when Minto came as Governor-General has been already mentioned before. To tide over the crisis, it it was necessary to make retrenchment in all departments of the state.

Military officers, in addition to their salary, drew several other allowances. Thus it was the practice to grant to the commanders of the native corps a monthly allowance known as the 'Tent Contract,' meant for the provision of camp equipage. In the Madras Presidency, Barlow, as its Governor, abolished, with the approval of the Supreme Government in Bengal, this allowance by a general order, dated May, 1808. This was enough to offend the British officers and make them rise in mutiny.

Perhaps there would have been no mutiny of these officers had the Governor of Madras been possessed of tact. But Barlow was a man of stern, cold, and repulsive manners, and the civil as well as military British servants of Madras considered it a grievance that a man who had been bred to public business in Bengal should have been appointed to the highest office, without having the advantages of local and personal knowledge of that presidency.

The British officers burst into open mutiny at Masulipatam, Seringapatam, Hydarabad and other places. Minto was of opinion

"that the successful combination of the Bengal officers in 1796, when Government at home took fright, is the real root of the late insubordination in the army of the Madras Presidency."*

The mutiny took a serious aspect when

"blood was shed in Mysore, for, as a mutinous battalion was marching from Chitteldroog to join the mutineers at Seringapatam, they encounted resistance from a body of dutiful troops, and fired upon and received the fire of their own countrymen or friends and fellow-soldiers. This was a dangerous spectacle to exhibit to the armed sepoys and the native inhabitants."† Macfarlane's *Our Indian Empire*, (Vol. II. p. 181).

In quelling the mutiny of the Christian European officers, such steps were not taken as are invariably done when the mutineers happen to be non-Christian and coloured persons. No Christian officer was hanged or blown from the mouth of cannon. To conciliate the mutineers and to redress their grievances, as it were, some of the most distinguished political officers of the time, such as Colonels Barry Close, John Malcolm, the Honourable Arthur Cole, were sent to stations where mutinous dispositions were manifested. Minto even went to Madras to make the mutineers understand the serious situation they had created by their conduct. No one can say

* Lord Minto in India, p. 210.

† No British historian of India has given an account of the Mutiny at Madras in greater detail than Mr. Macfarlane, who in the footnotes at pages 182-184 has narrated things not referred to by other writers. He concludes his footnote at page 184 as follows :

"In the histories and other books written by the functionaries and servants of the East India Company, we see, generally, a disposition to glide over the whole of this story as quickly as possible. This surely is not the proper way to treat a subject which was so important and so critical at the time and which contains lessons and warnings proper for all times."

what the consequences would have been, had the mutineers delayed in returning to their allegiance to the properly constituted authorities. It would have perhaps encouraged the Marathas to try to get back the territories that had been wrested from them a few years before and the Nizam and the Peishwa, prisoners as they were, would have tried to come out of their prisons and throw off the yoke of the subsidiary alliance that had been placed on their necks by the British.*

* M. Victor Jacquemont, writing to his father on October 28th, 1830, said :

"The English officers of the Indian army are exceedingly dissatisfied with Lord William and the Court of Directors on account of the reduction recently made in their pay. Twenty years ago, a sedition of this kind, provoked by the same cause broke out in the Madras Presidency....... This happened at a critical period. If Runjit Sing had then crossed the Sutledge, the Mahrattas and Bundelcund, which were not then reduced to submission, and marched to Bengal, the British power would no doubt have re-entered into the limits conquered by Lord Clive : but the revolted of Madras soon perceived the danger and returned of themselves to their duty,......... and *the Government had the weakness not to shoot a single officer.*" (Pp. 323-324, Vol. I. of *Letters from India*. The italics are ours.)

CHAPTER XLIV

THE MARQUESS OF HASTINGS'S ADMINISTRATION
(1813-1823)

The nobleman who succeeded Lord Minto in the Government of India deserves a very close study of his character to enable one to understand the nature of his Indian administration. His rule forms a very conspicuous signpost in the history of British India. His is the central figure in the Trinity of British Christian nobles who within the first fifty-six years of the nineteenth century, trampled the rights of the princes and peoples of Hindustan under foot, and succeeded by means of fraud and force in depriving Indians of their independence, and rivetting the chain of slavery round their necks. Wellesley, Hastings and Dalhousie constitute the Trinity of empire-builders in the Christian administration of India during the nineteenth century.

The Marquess of Hastings was a native of Scotland by nationality, and he entered the army while still in his teens. He served under Cornwallis during the American War of Independence. Like his chief, he had to surrender his sword to the leader of the American rebels, and thus his military career, at its very start, was anything but a success. As a nobleman of the united kingdom of England and Scotland, he had a seat in the Upper House of Parliament, but it does not appear that he ever cut a very prominent figure in politics. But by the manner in which he ingratiated himself with the ministry of the day in the first decade of the nineteenth century, he was chosen to establish a reputation for himself in India, where alone at that time it was possible to make amends for the failures sustained in Christendom and to win laurels, by diplomacy or by unsheathing the sword.

No satisfactory explanation has ever been given for the step which the ministry took in recalling Minto from India. But to us it seems that the ministry at that time wanted to bring more territory in India under the jurisdiction of their countrymen and so they did not like a peace-loving man like Minto to be at the helm of their affairs in India. They wanted the pursuit of a more vigorous policy in India in unison with their political affairs in Europe, so as to catch the imagination, kindle the interest and win the applause of the British people. This aspect of the question should always be borne in mind by all writers of Indian history: for the policy of the political party in power in England has often guided Indian affairs and have made them run parallel to those of England, after making every effort by strong advocacy and otherwise, to induce the majority of the British public and others, to look at things from their own view-point.

What was the state of England and of Europe at the time, then ? Napoleon was the virtual dictator of the whole of Europe, and he held all the states of that continent within the hollow of his hand. England alone stood against him and spent money like water, to bribe all the powers of Europe in order to brino about his

downfall. But where did all this money come from? England at the beginning of the nineteenth century was not so rich as she was at its close. Her principal source of wealth was her commerce. It is well known that Napoleon prohibited the importation of English goods into any part of the vast European continent. Napoleon tried to conquer the sea by land. His navy had been destroyed by England and so he could not do any harm to England on the sea, but the loss which England suffered by the prohibition of the importation of her manufactured articles into any state of Europe was great. She had to make up this loss in the best way she could. There was no other way of effectually gaining this end than that of forcing her goods on India. England was the mistress of the sea, and India was the only country which Nepoleon's octopus-like arms did not reach. The importance of India at this crisis to England has been fully appreciated by so competent a writer as Sir George Birdwood, who in his introduction to *The First Letter Book of the East India Company, 1600-1619,* states that it was the Companys possession of India which enabled England, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, to successfully resist the machinations of Napoleon I., and he declares that

"the continued possession of India will be our chief stay in sustaining the manufacturing and mercantile preponderance in this country in the crushing commercial competition with which we have now everywhere to contend."

It was by bleeding India that England succeeded in raising money to intrigue with other European powers against, and to fight with Nepoleon. How the interests of India were at this time sacrificed for those of England is not well known to all. Till the beginning of the nineteenth century, India was not only an agricultural, but also a manufacturing country. Before the establishment of British rule, India was the greatest manufacturing country in the world. Her cotton fabrics used to be imported into every country of the civilised world. It was to buy her cotton fabrics that the Christian nations of Europe made their way to India. It was by destroying this cotton manufacture of India, that England succeeded in raising money to overcome Napoleon. In order to secure the cotton manufacture for herself, England forbade the importation of India's cottons into England; nay, on the contrary, when Napoleon had shut England out from the markets of continental Europe, she forced the East India Company to lower all the duties hitherto levied on English goods entering India. She thus flooded India with cheap cotton, and brought about the ruin of the Indian weavers and of Indian cotton manufacture. Regarding the destruction of the Indian cotton manufacture H. H. Wilson has written as follows :

"The history of the trade of cotton cloths with India affords a singular exemplification of the inapplicability to all times and circumstances of that principle of free trade which advocates the unrestricted admission of a cheap article, in place of protecting by heavy duties a dearer one of home manufacture. *It is also a melancholy instance of the wrong done to India by the country on which she had become dependent.* It was stated in evidence, that the cotton and silk goods of India up to this period (1813) could be sold for a profit in the British market, at a price from fifty to sixty per cent. lower than those fabricated in England. It consequently became necessary to protect the latter by duties of seventy and eighty per cent. on their value, or by positive prohibition. Had this not been the case, had not such prohibitory duties and decrees

existed, the mills of Paisley and of Manchester would have been stopped in their outset, and could scarcely have been again set in motion even by the powers of steam. *They were created by the sacrifice of the Indian manufacture.* Had India been independent, she would have retaliated, would have imposed preventive duties upon British goods, and thus would have preserved her own productive industry from annihilation. This act of self-defence was not permitted her; she was at the mercy of the stranger. *British goods were forced upon her without paying any duty, and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms."**

Thus by destroying India's cotton manufacture England established her market in India. The money required in order to bribe, corrupt and subsidise the states of Europe was so large that England was loaded with a very heavy debt. The resources of "Golden India" were indented upon to liquidate this debt. It was therefore necessary to bring under the British administration and to reduce as many independent states of India as possible. It seems clear then that Minto was replaced by the Marquess of Hastings to carry out the policy of the English ministry of the day to extend the boundaries of their empire,† to strangle the weaving industry of India, and thus to create a market for English goods and ultimately enrich England and enable her to hold her own against Nepoleon.§

If we remember these facts and take into due consideration their significance, then we shall be able to fully understand this period of Indian history and the object of the wars which were carried on during the Marquess of Hasting's regime.

It has already been said before that there is a great deal of resemblance between the chequered military career of Cornwallis and that of the Marquess of Hastings. Cornwallis came out to India to retrieve his character and rehabilitate himself in the estimation of the English people. He was not only the Governor-General of India but also its Commander-in-Chief. To the functions of the statesman he added those of the soldier. Similarly when the Marquess of Hastings was sent out to India. he came in the double capacity of the Governor-General as well as of Commander-in-Chief. Whatever plausible arguments might be adduced in favour of this combination of civil and military duties in one person, at the time of the appointment of the Marquess of Hastings, can hardly apply to the circumstances of the period, when he was sent to govern India. The very fact of the Marquess of Hastings becoming the Military Chief of India, as well as its Governor-General, clearly indicates that the Ministry wanted to give him a free hand in the management of India affairs. It is quite probable that the Marquess of Hastings must have expressed a desire to be the Commander-in-Chief in India in addition to his other duties in order to leave a name in the temple of fame

* VI. p. 385. See also the present writer's *Ruin of Indian Trade and Industries.*

† In May 1823, the officers in London gave Lord Hastings a dinner; Lord W. C. Bentinck in the chair. Lord Hastings then declared that he had "followed in the footsteps of the Marquess Wellesley." In other words, he was as unscrupulous as Lord Wellesley.

§ Not only did the acquisition of India not cost England a single farthing, but on the contrary, India was made to pay for all the wars which England waged against Napoleon, either for her own defence, or for the establishment of her supremacy as the First Power in the world.

as a military genius, and thus to wipe out the blot that was attached to his name for having surrendered his sword to Washington.

The following facts then should be remembered in order to fully understand the Indian career of the Marquess of Hastings:

1. The recall of Lord Minto, which has never been satisfactorily explained.

2. The appointment of the Marquess of Hastings as Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of India.

3. The resemblance between the chequered military careers of the Marquess Cornwallis and the Marquess of Hastings in America.

4. The situation of political affairs in Europe, and how Napoleon had prohibited the importation of English goods in all the countries of that continent.

5. The necessity felt by England for raising money to corrupt, bribe and intrigue with other European powers against Napoleon, and also to fight him in order to establish her supremacy as the First Power in the world.

6. England succeeded in raising money by destroying the cotton manufacture of India.

The English writers of Indian history have not brought out in bold relief the fact that the Marquess of Hastings was the prototype of the Marquess of Dalhousie as regards his policy towards the independent native states of India. In one of his papers Mr. Henry St. George Tucker, who was Director of the East India Company, writes:

> "The Marquess of Hastings took charge of the government in 1813, and manifested at a very early period, that his views of our foreign policy differed widely from those of his immediate predecessors,"

In a foot note to this passage Mr. Tucker adds:

> "I don't think it necessary to refer to his lordship's minutes and correspondence, in which this opinion is expressed. It is throughout maintained and acted upon."

Then Mr. Tucker continues:

> "He (the Marquess of Hastings) was evidently impressed with the opinion that the absolute supremacy of the British power throughout India must be maintained, and that the native states must be united in one great federative league, under a supreme head, which should control and protect them."
>
> "This broad scheme of policy, which has found some strenuous advocates, is very much in unison with that which was for some time successfully pursued in Europe by the late ruler of France (*i. e.*, Napoleon Bonaparte). . . . It was perfectly simple in its own nature, and reducible to one single proposition—the establishment of the well-meant despotism of a powerful state over all its weaker neighbours."*

If we bear the above in mind, we shall be enabled to understand all the wars which the Marquess of Hastings waged against the native powers of India.

* *Memorials of Indian Government*, being a selection from the papers of Henry St. George Tucker. Edited by John William Kaye. Pp. 233-234.

CHAPTER XLV

REFLECTIONS ON THE E. I. CO.'S CHARTER OF 1813

The Earl of Moira embarked at Portsmouth, on board H. M. S. *The Stirling Castle,* under command of Admiral Sir Home Popham, accompanied by the Countess of Loudon and Moria and his three eldest children, on the 14th of April; and landed at Madras on the 11th of September, 1813. It was during Earl Moria's voyage to India that Act 53 Geor. III. Cap. 155, commonly known as the East India Company's Charter of 1813, was passed in England.

It is necessary here to offer a few reflections on the East India Company's Charter of 1813.

The far-reaching consequences of the terms on which the Charter of the East India Company was renewed in 1813 have not received that attention from the writers of Indian history which they deserve. India had been conquered and ruled by other nations before the English became masters of the country. But none inflicted such miseries on her as the English. Other rulers of India were imperialists, that is to say, they were content to keep power in their hands and exercise it. But the English were primarily a nation of shop-keepers. They were not satisfied merely with becoming the rulers of India; they desired also to become shop-keepers in India and, therefore, opened shops in this country.

The commercial character of British rule in its present form dates from the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1813. True it is that the East India Company was a trading corporation. But they were not so much the importers of English manufactured goods into India as exporter of Indian goods to Europe. The deliberate destruction of Indian industries dates from 1813 when English goods were forced on India on the principle of Free Trade. Since that date has commenced India's degradation.

If economically the renewal of the Company's Charter was disastrous to India, it was no less morally also. Since time immemorial, "plain living and high thinking" has been the guiding principle of the natives of Hindustan. But the philanthropists of England, on the occasion of the renewal of the Charter in 1813, were anxious to see Indians give up plain living. They wanted to make them luxurious and addicted to drinking, &c.* How often was the question put to the witnesses who appeared before

* Mr. Holt Mackenzie, in his evidence before the Commons' Committee, on the 23rd February 1832, said :

"I believe intercourse with Europeans leads to indulgence in the use of wine and spirits, which, though it may be lamented on the score of morals, must be beneficial to the revenue; their servants are generally better clothed, and the articles of clothing being subject to taxation, that would increase the revenue,......

"Judging from Calcutta, there has been, I think, a marked tendency among the natives to

the Select Committees of the two Houses of Parliament whether the rich natives spent their superfluous wealth in the purchase of English commodities! Unless the natives of India were of luxurious and to some extent depraved habits, there was not much likelihood of their patronising English goods. So India, which was sober, India, which was abstemious, was to be made intemperate and luxurious, in order to extend the market of England. But the masses of the Indian people did not require any luxuries, for they had hardly any wants. Their wants were supplied by Nature and the arts of their country. So England had to destroy the industries of the Indians in order to oblige them to purchase English goods.

It is a pity that there was no Indian living in 1813 who could see through the designs of the English when the Company's Charter was renewed. Even the enlightened and far-seeing Ram Mohun Roy falied to do do. Had the Indians been able to understand the intentions of their rulers in 1813, the birth of the Swadeshi *cum* boycott movement would have then taken place. The success of that movement in India would have been as great then as it had been in America on the eve of the Revolution. But unfortunately the natives of India had been so successfully hypnotised by the English that they believed them to be their benefactors and that whatever they did was for the benefit of India.

It was because England wanted to create and extend her market in India, that the policy of exterminating the native states of India was mercilessly pursued. On the occasion of the renewal of the East India Company's Charter in 1793, through the exertions of Sir Philip Francis, a clause was inserted in the Charter Act that

> "To pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honor, and policy of this nation," &c.

But no inquiry was made in 1813 whether that clause had been violated or not by the Company. No, in the Charter Act of 1813, when its framers showed their solicitude for promoting the happiness of the natives of India, knowing how flagrantly the provision of the Charter Act of 1793 contained in the clause quoted above, had been violated by Wellesley, did nothing to restrain any other Governor-General from following his example. That omission in the Charter Act of 1813 was a significant one.

indulge in English luxuries; they have well-furnished houses, many wear watches, they are fond of carriages, and are understood to drink wines."

Yes, it gladdened the hearts of many a Christian Anglo-Indian that the natives had taken to the drinking of wines. In his evidence before the Commons' Committee on the 24th March, 1832, Mr. Bracken said that

"Liquors in Calcutta are now consumed in large quantities by natives who can afford to purchase them."

In answer to another question the same witness said :

"I heard from a native shopkeeper in Calcutta, who is one of the largest retail shopkeepers, that his customers for wines, and brandy, and beer, were principally natives.

"1936. What should you say was the favorite wine among the natives?—Champaigne.

"1937. Formerly did they not consume any wine ?—Very little, I believe.

"1938. Is it not contrary to their religion ?—I do not know whether it is contrary to their religion, but it is contrary to their habits it is not done openly, but when done it is a violation of their custom rather than of their religion."

No, it was not the interest of the English in 1813 to express their repugnance at the schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India as it was in 1793. They had to create and extend the market in India for English manufactures, and therefore, it was necessary to bring as much territory under the dominion of England as it was possible by means of fraud and force.

About the time when the Company's Charter was to be renewed in 1813, Sir Thomas Munro wrote :

"It is our political power, acquired by the Company's arms, that has made the trade to India what it is : without that power, it would have been kept within narrow bounds by the jealousy and exactions of the Native Princes, and by some, such as Tippoo, could have been prohibited altogether."*

Munro represented the opinions and views of the politicians and statesmen of his time who had anything to do with India. Under the circumstance, it is quite reasonable to infer that the wars which were waged against the native powers of India after 1813 were not "repugnant to the wish, the honour, and policy" of the natives of England. That accounts for the honors and rewards that were conferred on Earl Moira and every subsequent Governor-General who followed in his footsteps.

While it is considered indefensible on moral considerations to tax the Roman Catholics of Ireland to maintain Protestant clergymen in their land. while people, although Christian, are protesting loudly against the Church of England Establishment in their midst, it is sad to think that the Charter of 1813 saddled India—a non-Christian country—with the cost of the Clerical Establishment. It was not fair dealing, nay, it was not even honest to do so.

The principle of religious neutrality which was the boast of the English in their Government of India was sacrificed when the Charter of 1813 permitted missionaries to proceed to India to preach the Gospel and convert its inhabitants. Religious neutrality demanded that the East India Company should have, when they permitted Christian missionaries to proceed to India and sactioned a Clerical Establishment at the expense of the heathens, encouraged Hindu and Muhammadan priests to preach and practise their religions by giving them stipends out of the revenues of India. But this they did not do.

Next to the destruction of the Indian industries, the greatest wrong which the Charter of 1813 inflicted on the Indian people was the permission granted to the Europeans to freely resort to India. They believed that this would in time lead to the colonization of India, And this there can be no doubt was their intention. In this, they considered, lay the security and permanence of their rule over the natives of Hindustan. The oppressions and cruelties practised by the adventurers of England on the inhabitants of India would, they probably thought, serve to strengthen the British dominion, by dispiriting and disheartening the latter. Colonization means displacement, and so, perhaps, it was thought that the lives of the inhabitants of India would be almost of as much value to the British adventurers as those of the North American

* Gleig's *Life of Sir Thomas Munro*, Vol. II. (1831) p. 347.

aborigines to the Pilgrim Fathers, of the Mexicans and Peruvians to the Spaniards, of Kaffirs to the South African settlers and of Maoris to the Australian colonisers. It was probably for this reason, that, in spite of the protests of Warren Hastings and others who could speak with authority on the subjet, the influx of Europeans into India was demanded. But owing perhaps to the numerous population of India, her advanced civilization and latent strength, Indians could not be treated as the natives of other regions had been by the white settlers.

The deliberate destruction of the Indian industries, making Indians give up their plain living and take to some of the vices as well as the luxurious life of the Western nations and thus demoralising them, allowing adventurers of Great Britian to freely resort to India to oppress and plunder its inhabitants, saddling non-Christian natives of India with the expense of a costly Christian clerical establishment permitting missionaries of the Christian persuation to proceed to India to insult and outrage the religious susceptibilities of the non-Christians, conniving at the wars on the native princes and the annexation of their dominions in order to extend their commerce (for trade follows the flag), were considered by the scheming and designing politicians of England of more than a century ago as promoting the interest and happiness of the natives of India. It was "the duty" of England to pursue these measures from motives of philanthropy and altruism!

The natives of England were put to great straits by Napoleon, who threatened to cripple, if not altogether destroy, their industries and commerce by blockading the ports of the continent of Europe. They were anxious to create a market for their goods in India. With this object in view, they did all they could to impose such terms on the East India Company on the occasion of the renewal of their Charter in 1813 as were calculated to promote their interests. They covered their selfish motives under the cloak of philanthropy. But a couple of years after the renewal of the Charter in 1813, the battle of Waterloo was fought, which resulted in the capture and exile of Napoleon. This was of great importance to England. The English industries were no longer threatened with extinction. The blockade being removed from the ports of the continent against English goods and a market being created, for them in India, gave a great impetus to the industries and commerce of England. The Marquess of Wellesley had waged wars against the native princes of India on the ostensible plea of removing centres of intrigue with the French. It was presumed that the French had been intriguing with the princes of India and as a measure of self-defence it was considered necessary by Wellesley to deprive the native states of their independence. Whether such a step was just or proper, and whether in going to war against the Indian princes, the Marquess was giving effect to that clause of the Charter Act of 1793 which declared, that "to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour and policy of the English nation," were questions which the Marquess never troubled to take into consideration.

But whatever justification might be urged in favour of the wars of the Marquess Wellesley, there was none for those of the Marquess of Hastings. The French

were no longer supposed to be intriguing with the native princes of India. The English historians do not tell us, but the terms of the renewal of the East India Company's Charter in 1813 do not leave any room for doubt, that the wars against and annexation of the territories of the native princes were prompted by the following two considerations, *viz.*:—(1) to extend the territories under the British supremacy in India in order to find a market for English goods, and (2) to bring hilly tracts under the jurisdiction of the company, in order to find suitable places for settlement and colonization by the English, which was sure to follow on their free influx into India.

The renewal of the East India Company's Charter in 1813 was designed to toll the death-knell of the Indian industries and to plunge Indians in poverty and misery.* The merchants of England sent their agents and emissaries to learn the wants of the natives of the country and thus to enable them to successfully cater to their needs.

If India is to-day poverty-stricken, if the land of plenty is the home of scarcity and recurrent famines and of plague, if the people have been demoralised and Indian society disorganised, if there is unrest in India, the cause of all these troubles may to a great extent be traced to the Charter of 1813. It did not confer any concessions on Indians, on the contrary, it had the effect of making their lot much worse than before. Had the framers of the Charter Act of 1813 used plain and unvarnished language they should have worded the 33rd section of that Act as follows:

> Whereas it is the duty of this country to enrich and aggrandise itself by all available means even if they lead to the infliction of miseries and degradation on the native inhabitants of the British dominions in India, etc., instead of the language of that section breathing lofty philanthropy and altruism. The sum total of the Charter of 1813 was that India was not for Indians but for England and Englishmen.

Earl Moira had to carry out and give effect to the policy underlying the Charter of 1813. If we keep this fact in mind, we shall be able to understand the secret of his Indian administration.

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* See *Ruin of Indian Trade and Industries* by the present writer.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE NEPAL WAR

I. ITS CAUSES

The Marquess of Hastings arrived in Calcutta on the first of October 1813, and on the fourth of that month assumed charge of the office of Commander-in-Chief combined with that of Governor-General.

The first act of his administration was to declare war against Nepal. It was a war in which the reputation of the British arms was greatly tarnished and they suffered great humiliation by the reverses inflicted on them by their Hindu antagonists.

British writers have tried to make out that the Nepalese government was the aggressive party and thus obliged the British Government to go to war. We have not come across any narrative of the war written by the Nepalese, but a perusal of the English account of the war, leaves the impression on one's mind that if the Nepalese took the offensive first, they were provoked to do so by the behavior of their adversaries towards them. The disputes which led to the war could have been, in all probability, amicably settled, had the British been inclined to do so.

The disputes arose over certain lands on the borders of the British and Nepalese territories. These lands lay in the districts of Saran and Gorakhpur. The Nepalese government advaned their claims over these lands; while, on the other hand, the British Indian government contended that these lands belonged to Zamindars who were under their protection, since they paid land tax to them. These border questions had their origin in the fact of the frontier being ill-defined. Although attempts had, from time to time, been made to define the frontier, these attempts generally ended in failure. It is on record that the British Government also connived at, and thus encouraged the Nepal government in their alleged aggressions on the territories of border zamindars who were under the protection of the British. Mr. Henry T. Prinsep in his "History of the Political and Military Transactions in India during the Administration of the Marquess of Hastings," writes:

"The Goorkhas,...as each Raja in the hills successively fell before them, exterminated the family; and becoming heir to all its possessions took ap likewise the old Raja's claims and contests with his neighbours. This brought them into contact with our Zemindars, who were, of course, unable to maintain themselves against such an enemy, and generally therefore had to resign the object in dispute; for unless when the encroachment was gross and easy of proof, it was vain to hope to interest the British Government in their favor. That government was, in the first place, no loser by the usurpation, for the public revenue was fully secured by the perpetual settlement, and by the increased value of the entire estate against any loss from a partial aggression. Moreover, it was, on principle, distrustful of the pretensions of its own subjects, which were generally exaggerated; while it regarded the Goorkha nation as a well-disposed neighbour, whom it was desirable to conciliate; hence an injured Raja of the plains would seldom succeed in procuring any powerful support to his cause, unless, as above observed, the case was very flagrant, when *the Goorkhas would on remonstrance make reparation.*"*

* Vol. I, pp. 63 *Et. seq.*

From the above it is quite clear that the pretensions advanced by the Zamindars were in most instances not correct and that the Nepalese government were open to reason and would make reparations when they were in the wrong. It is moreover also evident *that neither the British nor the* Nepalese *government* so far ever desired to settle any dispute by the sword. So far all the Border differences and disputes berween the two governments used to be settled by means of commissions consisting of nominees of both the governments. Their findings were usually considered to be satisfactory to both the parties. But with the arrival of the Marquess of Hastings affairs assumed a different complexion. When he landed on the shores of India, a commission was inquiring into these disputes. Major Bradshaw was the nominee of the Government of India on this commission. But it would seem that he must have known the aggressive policy of the new Governor-General. On this ground alone, we can account for his offensive and ungentlemanly behavior towards the Nepalese Commissioners. It is on record that,

"they (the Nepalese Commissioners) had an interview with the Major, who made use of improper language towards them ; in consequence of which they remained silent ; and, seeing no business brought forward, they came away."*

This occured in March 1814.

Lord Hastings also did not try to smooth matters. He addressed to the Raja of Nepal a peremptory requisition to evacuate the lands under dispute; and he sent the letter through the Magistrate of Gorukhpoor, giving that officer authority to order the advance of a body of troops to occupy the contested lands, in case the Raja's order for their evacuation should not arrive within twenty-five days from the date of his forwarding the letter. The Nepal Government was further informed that the Magistrate had these orders.

The die was now cast. The Government of India were fully determined upon hostilities. The peremptory tone of the Governor-General's letter to the Raja of Nepal was not calculated to preserve peace and amity between the two governments. The Gurkha government was not going to be so easily cowed down by the threatening attitude assumed by the British. Never in their history, had the Gurkhas so far known what defeats and disasters meant. They could look back with pride to their glorious past and the chivalrous conduct of their ancestors. Within the memory of their men then living, it was not forgotten how the Gurkhas had inflicted defeat on the English who had been made to precipitate an ignominious retreat. An expedition in 1767 against Nepal was undertaken by the Government of Bengal at the recommendation of Mr. Golding, the commercial agent at Betia, who feared that the success of the Gurkhas would ruin the trade he carried on with Nepal. Major Kinloch commanded the expedition. He advanced into the hills in October, 1767 and had not strength enough to establish a chain of depots to secure his communications with the plains; consequently, having penetrated to Hureehurpoor, he was detained there by a nulla, not formidable, and the bridge and raft he constructed

* Mills and Wilson, VIII, p. 12 foot-note.

were carried away after a fall of rain, which swelled the torrent unnaturally. The delay thus experienced exhausted his supplies, and produced sickness; so that, finally, he was obliged to return early in December.

The lesson then learnt was not easily and soon forgotten by the English. But they were also smarting under the humiliation they had then been subjected to. They were watching for nearly half a century for an opportunity to wipe out the disgrace of ignominious retreat before the Gurkhas. The Marquess of Hastings thought that the favourable opportunity for striking the blow at the Gurkhas had come.

The Gurkhas did not, of course, sue for peace. They boldly and bravely took up the challenge of the English. It would have shown pusillanimity and cowardice on their part, had they yielded to the threat. Their principal chiefs held a council and deliberately considered the question of peace or war. The decision of the council was for war. Their determination indicated a lofty and patriotic spirit.

But they did not make their decision known to the British Government, because they were as yet quite unprepared for the war. The Governor-General's threatening letter was answered by mere common-place assurances of respect, and of a desire to keep up a good understanding with the English, but omitting all mention of the subject of the disputed lands.

Under such circumstances, it was proper for the India Government not to occupy the disputed lands without further consideration, but the Magistrate of Goruckpore was only too anxious to carry into execution the orders of the Governor-General, and so, on the expiration of the period, he addressed the commanding officer at the station, and three companies marched to occupy the lands. The Gurkha officers retired before them without making the slightest opposition.

But the Nepalese were not idle. When the troops under British officers occupied the disputed lands, they did not offer any resistance, because they had not till then made all the necessary preparations for the war. The Indian Government were thus thrown off their guard. Having established a few police Thanas in the disputed districts, and without anticipating attack or hostility on the part of the Gurkhas, the troops were ordered to retire from the disputed districts.

Here was the opportunity now for the Gurkhas to take advantage of the want of foresight and forethought on the part of the Indian Government. The troops had hardly returned to Gorukhpoor when on the morning of the 29th May, 1814, the Gurkhas attacked the newly established police Thanas.

Of course, the British Government were not going to submit to this insult at the hands of the Nepalese. They did not at once declare war against the government of Nepal. The cause of this delay has been thus explained by Mr. Prinsep in his work already alluded to above :

"The formal declaration of war was purposely delayed till the close of the rains in order to allow time for persons engaged in trade with Nepal to withdraw their capital, as well as to give the Nepalese the opportunity of disavowing the act of Munraj, and punishing the perpetrators, if so inclined. They showed no disposition to do so; but, on the contrary, made the most

active military preparations along the whole extent of their frontier. The declaration of war was accordingly at length issued by his Lordship from Lukhnow, on the 1st November, 1814."*

Reviewing the whole situation of affairs after a century, the conclusions which any unprejudiced man would come to, is that the Nepalese were provoked to the war by the British and that the war could have been averted had the British Government been so inclined.

When the war against Nepal was declared, the financial position of the Company's government in India was very deplorable. The credit of the government bonds for monies borrowed was so low that twelve per cent discount was the regular calculable rate in the market. There was little possibility for government to raise more money by loan to carry on the war. Lord Hastings followed the examples set by some of his predecessors in squeezing the Nawab Vazir of Oudh. When he came out to India as its Governor-General, the Prince of Oudh was Ghaziuddin Hydar. Prisoner as this Muhammadan Prince was his life was being made miserable by his Christian keeper, named Major Baillie. Reports of his ill-treatment by the latter reached the Governor-General, who proceeded to Lucknow, ostensibly to lessen the weight of the chain by which the Vazir was held in thraldom, but in reality to squeeze him to successfully carry on the war with Nepal. He succeeded so far that the Nawab Vazir, it was said, "out of gratitude," advanced him a loan of two and a half crores of rupees, with which money it was not difficult for Hastings to prosecute the war.

It was certainly not out of gratitude that the above-mentioned sum of money was paid by the Oudh Prince. How he was tortured to part with that amount has been narrated in *"Dacoitee in excelsis"* in detail in Chapter IV. In the course of that chapter, the author of that work writes:

"Such was the style in which the Indian Government approached its victim, while its policy was to flatter. The *'Mine of Munificence'* was thus worked with cautious approaches, and pious ejaculations, and every fresh shaft was opened with official prayers." When the 'Mine' was impoverished, the process was different......"

But the people of Nepal did not forget that their country would not have been invaded, and a great portion of it sequestered, had not Oudh helped the British Government with money. Vengeance sleeps long but it never dies. It was, therefore, that the Nepalese came to the help of the English in the Indian Mutiny of 1857 and carried fire and sword through Oudh and plundered it to their heart's content, and killed thousands of its inhabitants in cold blood.

* *Loc. Cit.*, (P. 78).

CHAPTER XLVII

THE NEPAL WAR

II. THE FIRST CAMPAIGN

The Nepal War was the bloodiest that had ever been fought by the British in India. The heroism and chivalry which the Nepalese showed on the occasion have become a matter of history. It will be of no use to enter into the labyrinth of details regarding the War, but a few salient points only are necessary to be mentioned.

It has been already said before that the new Governor-General had determined to distinguish himself by military exploits and by bringing new territories under the administration of the East India Company. It would seem that with these objects in view, he set out in June, 1814 for the Upper Provinces to make a tour of inspection. It was while tourng in these provinces that he matured out his scheme of operations against the Nepalese. He had already threatened them with war and they replied to it by attacking the outposts and *thanas* which the British Government had established in the disputed districts. War was inevitable and the British made all the necessary preparations before formally declaring it.*

* It is certain that the British Government of India had at this time not a very high opinion of the military skill of the Gurkhas. They were not much to blame when the fact is taken into consideration that even the Sikhs had duped the astute Gurkha general Amar Singh Thapa, only four or five years previously. In the beginning of the 19th century the Sikhs were not recognized as a military power in India and it was not considered difficuit by the British to conquer or defeat them. Lord Hastings' government must have argued in this wise, that if such an insignificant people as the Sikhs could outwit and defeat the Gurkhas it would certainly not be a difficult task for him to beat and vanquish the Nepalese. Captain Cunningham has very graphically described the manner in which the Nepalese Commander was duped by the Sikhs under Ranjit Singh. He writes:

"He (Ranjit Singh) was invited, almost at the same time (*i. e.* 1809) by Sundar Chand of Kotoch, to aid in resisting the Goorkhas, who were still pressing their long continued siege of Kangra, and who had effectually dispelled the Rajput prince's dreams of a supremacy reaching from the Jumna to the Jhelum. The stronghold was offered to the Sikh ruler as the price of his assistance, but Sunder Chand hoped in the meantime, to gain admittance himself, by showing to the Goorkhas the futility of resisting Runjit Singh, and by promising to surrender the fort to the Nepal commander, if allowed to withdraw his family. The Maharaja saw through the schemes of Sundar Chand, and he made the son of his ally a prisoner, while he dexterously cajoled the Kathmandoo general Ummer Singh Thapa, who proposed a joint warfare against the Rajput mountaineers, and to take, or receive in the meantime, the fort of Kangra as part of the *Goorkha* share of the general spoil. The Sikhs got possession of the place by suddenly demanding admittance as the expected relief. Sundar Chand was foiled, and Ummar Singh retreated across the Sutlej, loudly exclaiming that he had been grossly duped. The active Nepalese Commander soon put down some disorders which had arisen in his rear, but the disgrace of his failure before Kangra rankled in his mind, and he made preparations for another expedition against it. He proposed to Sir David Ochterlony a joint march to the Indus, and a separate appropriation of the plains and the hilis; and Runjit Singh, ignorant alike of English moderation and of international law, became apprehensive lest the allies of Nepal should be glad of

The principality of Nepal at this time was small compared to the territories then under the administration of the East India Company. The Nepalese had a very long frontier to guard. It is ture that they had subjected many of the petty hill chiefs and tribes on their frontier, but this added to their weakness rather than to their strength. Add to these, the discipline and superior arms of the British, and then will be quite clear that the Nepalese were to fight against odds and under great and many disadvantages. They were not in a position to bring into the fields so many fighting men and pieces of cannon as their adversaries. They had also neither the tact and knowledge nor the necessary funds to intrigue with and corrupt the men in the ranks of their opponents. These facts should not be lost sight of in connection with the war.

The war was formally declared against Nepal on the 1st November, 1814. But before this announcement, the British were making elaborate military preparations for the purpose of overawing the Nepalese. Mr. Prinsep writes that Lord Hastings

"resolved to act offensively against the enemy along the whole line of frontier, from the Sutlej to the Koosee; and the following was the allotment ultimately made of this space to the several divisions that were brought into the field.

"It was assigned to Colonel Ochterlony who commanded the post established at Loodheeana in 1808-9, to operate in the hilly country lying near the Sutlej. The force under this officer's command was exclusively native infantry and artillery, and amounted to about six thousand men; it had a train of two 18-pounders, ten 6-pounders, and four mortars and howitzers."

"From Meeruth in the Dooab, Major-General Gillespie ...... was to proceed first against the Dehra Doon ...... and as soon as this should be reduced, which it was expected would

a pretext for coercing one who had so unwillingly acceded to their limitation of his ambition......... ....But Ummer Singh long brooded over his reverse and tried in various ways to induce the British authorities to join him in assailing the Punjab. The treaty with Nepal, he would say, made all strangers the mutual friends or enemies of the two governments, and Runjit Singh had wantonly attacked the Goorkha possessions in Kotoch. Besides, he would argue, to advance is the safest policy, and what could have brought the English to the Sutlej but the intention of going beyond it?"

From the above it is evident then that the English had a very contemptuous opinion of the Gurkhas and it would seem that they intended to pit the Sikhs against the Gurkhas; for while they withheld all hopes of help to the Gurkhas, they nevertheless promised Ranjit Singh assistance against the Nepalese. Captain Cunningham writes:

"He (Ranjit Singh) made known that *he* was desirous of meeting Ummer Singh Thapa on his own ground; and the reply of the governor-general that he might not only himself cross the Sutlej to chastise the invading Goorkhas in the hills but that, if they descended into the plains of Sirhind, he would receive English assistance, gave him another proof that the river of the treaty was really to be an impassable barrier. He had got the assurance he wanted, and he talked no more of carrying his horsemen into mountain recesses."

This declaration of the policy of the British Government of India towards Ranjit Singh must have impressed the Gurkhas with the belief that the British did not like to live on terms of peace with them, and perhaps must have deterred them from amicably settling the frontier disputes. It is certain that had the British Government shown that spirit towards the Gurkhas which neighbours desirous of living on terms of peace with each other ought to do, and tried to make up differences between Ranjit Singh and the Nepalese, there would have been no misunderstanding between the English and the Gurkhas and thus in all probability, the Nepal war would not have taken place. But from the conduct of the English Government it seems that they provoked the Nepalese to go to war with them.

not be an operation of much time or difficulty, the force was to divide; and while a detachment attacked Gurhwal and Sirinugur, under the snowy range, the main body was to proceed against Nahn, to the west of the Jumna, in aid of the operations of Major-General Ochterlony against Umur Singh. General Gillespie's force originally consisted of his Majesty's 53d, which, with artillery and a few dismounted dragoons, made up about one thousand Europeans, and two thousand five hundred native infantry. . . . . . .*

"From Benares and Gorakhpur a force was collected, and placed under the command of Major-General John Sullivan Wood, and his instructions were to penetrate by Bootwul into Palpa. This division consisted of his Majesty's 17th foot, nine hundred and fifty strong, and about three thousand native infantry; it had a train of seven 6 and 3-pounders, and four mortars and howitzers. . . . . .

"Further east from Patna and Moorshedabad, another force of a strength of near eight thousand men, including his Majesty's 24th foot, nine hundred and seven strong, was collected for the main attack, which was intended to be made direct upon the capital of Katmandoo by the passes between the Gundak and Bagmuttee. Major-General Marley was entrusted with the command of this army, and there was a train attached to it of four 18-pounders, eight 6 and 3-pounders, and fourteen mortars and howitzers. The Ganges was to be crossed by the troops from Patna on the 15th of November; and a further brigade was formed, from troops more distant stations, to follow the army and secure its depots and rear, as it advanced into the hills.

"Beyond the Koosee eastward, Major Latter was furnished with two thousand men, including his district battalion, for the defence of the Poornea frontier. This officer was desired to open a communication with the petty Raja of Sikkim, and to give him every assistance and encouragement to expel the Goorkhas from the eastern hills, short of an actual advance of troops for the purpose.

Thus the Government of India kept ready 30,000 men and 60 guns for the purpose of invading the country of the Gurkhas. The latter could, with great difficulty, muster 12,000 men, and these were ill-armed and ill-disciplined.

Major-General Gillespie's force was the first to penetrate the Nepalese frontier. On the 22nd of October he seized the Keree pass leading into the Doon, and thence proceeded to Dehra, without meeting any opposition. The Gurkha Government had allotted a force of about six hundred men under the command of Captain Bulbhudur Singh for the defence of the Doon. The prodigies of valour wrought by this Hindoo militant are worthy subjects for the pen of some epic poets of India. Regarding this episode of the Nepal War, a distinguished Indian gentleman (Babu Sishir Kumar Ghose) writes:

It is not quite correct to say that but for the English the Mussalmans would have cut the Hindus to pieces.

The English came when Hindus had not been able to recover completely from the shock of the destructive Mussalman occupation. This second shock broke them down completely. To ascertain what Hindus were like in the early days, we have to see whether there is yet any State in India which had not been bled and weakened by the Mussalman onslaught. The only State which escaped this destructive flood of Mussalman occupation, was Nepal. So when the English went to fight with the Nepalese, they found what the Hindus were like in early days, not demoralized by defeat and disaster. We shall here describe the first brush of the English with a handful of Nepalese, some three hundred in number, badly armed, badly protected, and weighted with the disadvantage of the presence of women and children.

War was declared against Nepal on the 1st November, 1814. A little before this declaration, it

Loc. Cit., Vol. I, pp. 83 *Et. Seq.*

was resolved to make a grand military demonstration for the purpose of over-awing the enemy. For this, four separate regiments had been ordered to march simultaneously from four different military stations. Major-General Gillespie commanded one of them.

On the 24th October, Gillespie's regiment reached Dehra Dun. Gillespie was not with his force, Colonel Mawbey had the command.

About three miles and a half from Dehra Dun was the little fortress of Kulunga, situated in a nook of the hills of Nalapani. It was something like a stone-henge—a small table-land surrounded by large blocks of stone which acted as the fort-wall,—which again was protected by a thick range of *sal* trees.

Finding the British force at his doors, Balabhadra Singh, nephew of Amar Singh, the Chief of Nahan, had taken refuge in this fortress of Nature with a few chosen followers, not exceeding three hundred. This was unbearable to Colonel Mawbey—the hill-fortress being within four miles of the great military station of Dehra Dun. Colonel Mawbey had reached Dehra Dun on the 24th. On that very night he had written to Balabhadra to surrender, and had received a proud reply of meeting him on the battle-field. Next morning, the active British General was marching up hill. He reached the base of the Nalapani Hills, and fixed his battery there; but, when he saw that with all his efforts, he could make no impression upon the enemy, he sent news to Gillespie at Saharanpur, and the Major-General made his apearance on the scene the next day, the 26th October. In two or three days he completed his preparations for the siege. Four detachments under Colonel Carpenter, Captain Faust, Major Kelly and Captain Campbell, surrounded the place from foursides; and a regiment under Major Ludlow was kept in reserve.

The siege began. The discharge from the British battery was returned by volleys of musketry, which wrought immense havoc amongst the British forces. Though the British cannon did much harm amongst the brave three hundred, they showed no sign whatever of giving way. The determined manner in which the post was defended by a small number of men against tremendous odds, guided by the best generals of the age, created a mingled feeling of surprise and indignation in the minds of the besiegers. The leaders of the siege forgot themselves; and in attempting to scale the walls. Lieutenant Ellis and Major-General Gillespie lost their lives.*

The command then devolved on Colonel Mawbey as the senior officer. He found that it would be rashness to proceed further in the siege, and that his prudent course would be to make a hasty retreat. This he did, and asked for re-inforcements and a battering train from Delhi. It took a month's time for the train to arrive; but, there was no help for it. The expected re-inforcements and battering train reaching him on the 24th November, a second attack was made the next day, and it was repulsed for a second time.

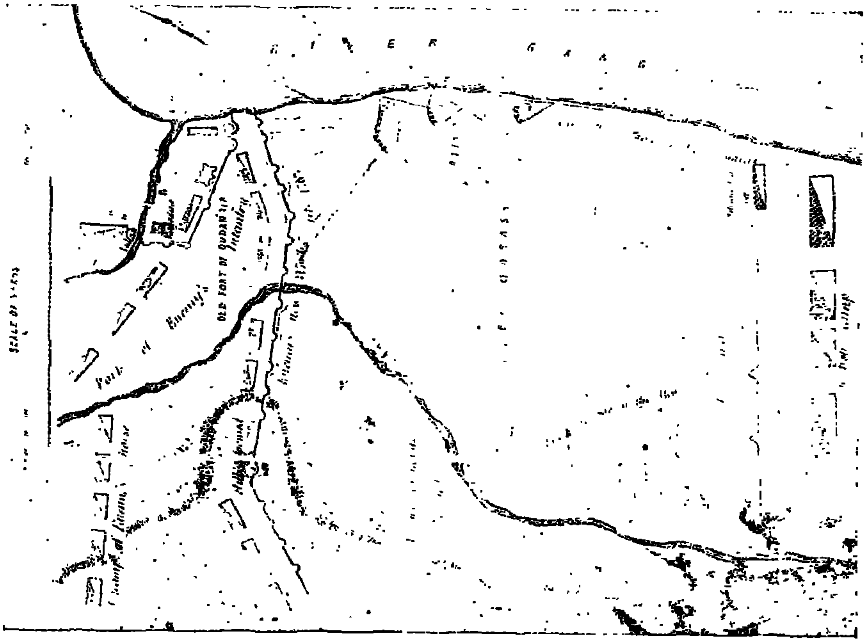
* The death of general Gillespie was very tragic and associated with the cowardice of the British troops. H. H. Wilson writes:

"General Gillespie, irritated by the repulse which had been sustained, persisted in renewing the attempt, declaring aloud his determination to carry the fort or lose his life. Accordingly, he placed himself at the head of three fresh companies of the 53rd regiment and of the dragoons, and led them again towards the gate of the fort. *When within range of the enemy's matchlocks, the men of the 53rd hung back. The General in advance of the line, in vain called on them to follow him; and while waving his sword to encourage them to come on, he was shot through the heart, and immediately expired.*"

In a footnote, Wilson adds: "The men of this regiment were in a discontented and sullen mood, conceiving themselves to have been overworked by the necessary repetition of parade exercise.

Those Englishmen who say that they have acquired India by the sword and hold India by the sword, should remember the fact that it was not the sword of their co-religionists which secured India for them. In fact, in almost all Indian campaigns where there was any hard fighting, British soldiers showed great cowardice and pusillanimity. Compare their behavior at the siege of Bharatpur with that of the Indian Sepoys.

General Ochterloney



Battle of Udhuanala

Meantime, the water-supply of the besieged had fallen short. The only supply was from the water-falls outside the fortress near the British encampment at Nalapani and this had virtually been cut off. In the midst of the shots which were rapidly decimating their numbers, the groans of the wounded, the cries of the women and children for water, the besieged had to defend their apology of a fort in which breeches had been made on all sides, from an overwhelming force, thirsting for their blood. They, however, did not mind the shots of the besiegers as the burning thirst which overcame them and all their dependants. From three hundred the number had been reduced to seventy. They might have then surrendered; and, their generous enemy filled with admiration at their noble conduct would have warmly accepted it. But the besieged heroes disdained to yield, and admit defeat!

On the last day of the month, when the batteries of the British troops were hurrying on their work, and volleys after volleys from the Gurkha musketry responded to them, there was a pause of a few minutes in the ranks of the besieged. Suddenly the iron gates were flung open, and out came the immortal seventy "with drawn swords in their hands, guns on their arms, the *kukri* or *bhujali* hanging from their belts, and the *chakra* or wheel resplendent on their head-dress, led by their chief, Balabhadra,—brave, erect, cheerful and his measured military gait;" and before the astounded British force had time to reflect, they had cut right through the line, drank to their heart's content from the springs of Nalapani, and in no time disappeared without any one of them being hurt!

The English razed Kulunga to the ground. The English historian of Dehra Dun, R. C. Williams, B. A., C. S., thus remarks on the incident:

"Such was the conclusion of the defence of Kulunga,—a feat of arms worthy of the best of chivalry, conducted with a heroism almost sufficient to palliate the disgrace of our own reverses." And in the silent forests at Dehra Dun, on the banks of the river Riechpana, stands a small monument, "as a tribute of respect for our gallant adversary, Balabhadra Singh."

Another Indian gentleman, Babu Moti Lal Ghose, writes in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* for February 16, 1900:

We have read of Leonidas in Greek history. He has been immortalized by Greek historians. But he belongs to ancient history; besides, his exploits have been recorded by his own countrymen. But Balabhadra belongs to modern history, and it was his enemies who recorded his exploits. Leonidas opposed an ill-armed barbarian horde, but Balabhadra opposed a far better-armed and better-disciplined enemy. When he refused to surrender, General Gillespie was amazed at his audacity!

* * * * *

We have heard innumberable accounts of bravery and chivalry, but Balabhadra's feat will beat every one of them. The world cannot show one equal to it.

Capt. Vansittart refers to this heroism of Balabhadra in his book "Notes on Nepal." He says: "In this defence Balabhadra with his 600 Gurkhas repulsed two assaults, inflicting on the British division a loss of 31 officers including General Gillespie, who was killed in the first assault, and 718 men, killed, wounded and missing."

* * * * *

Mind, the Gurkhas were only 600 and badly armed and without any adequate cover. Mind, they were subjected to "incessant shelling for three days," as Capt. Vansittart says. Mind, they had no water to slake their thirst.

What followed was still more wonderful. "The survivors, 90 in number," says Captain Vansittart, "cut their way through our posts and escaped." And thus, these 90 heroes, with only *kukries* in their hands, cut a passage for themselves, through the British lines!

Says Captain Vansittart: "During the assaults in the fort, women were seen hurling stones and undauntedly exposing themselves, and several of their dead bodies were subsequently found admidst the ruins of the fort."

When the British entered the fort they "saw the evidence of the desperate courage and bloody resistance of these six hundred men opposed to means so overwhelming." "For, the whole area of the fort was a slaughter house, strewed with the bodies of the dead and wounded." Captain Vansittart continues to say: "The defence of this fort retarded a whole division for over a month." So, was not Balabhadra, as described by his opponents, greater than Leonidas? Yet Leonidas is known to every body, and Balabhadra to none!

But if they shewed courage, they also shewsd the highest generosity. They never touched the dead bodies of the enemy or stripped any one of them. They were too high-minded to offer insult to the dead.

It was evident then that the British could not succeed in subduing the Gurkhas by means of the sword alone. It was found necessary to supplement the sword by fraud. Accordingly Colonel Mawbey, who had succeeded General Gillespie in the command, detached Lieut.-Colonel Carpenter to a position on the right bank of the Jumna in order to intrigue with the hill tribes, should any of them show a disposition to rise and throw off the Gurkha yoke. It is on record that

"The people of the Jounsar in consequence took up arms, and so much alarmed the Gurkha garrison of Barat, a stronghold in the mountains, that they hastily evacuated a fort which could not have been reduced without trouble and loss."*

Notwithstanding these intrigues, the British again met with reverses and disasters, which did not reflect much credit on their generals and military officers.

Colonel Mawbey himself marched towards Nahan, the capital of the small state of Sirmor. The Raja of this state was dispossessed by the Gurkhas and so he entered into an intrigue with the British. To this circumstance, in all probability, should be attributed the fact of the Gurkhas evacuating this place and retiring to Jythak. Prinsep writes:

"Nahn .... though upon a hill two thousand feet high, was not deemed by the enemy to be of sufficient strength for their main stand. Accordingly Runjoor Singh had received Umar Singh's orders to retire to a position north of the town, and to occupy the surrounding heights and the fort of Jythuk, situated at a point where two spurs of mountainous ridges meet, and the peak at the intersection rises to a height of three thousand six hundred feet above the level of the plains of Hindustan."†

At Jythak the Gurkhas were about two thousand strong, while their enemy had at least an equal number of men. Major-General Martindel having been appointed to succeed General Gillespie, took over the command of the division from Colonel Mawbey on the 20th December. Having ascertained the evacuation of Nahn, he caused it to be occupied by Major Ludlow on the 24th of December and on the following day proceeded with his whole force against Jythuk, which was defended by stockades at various heights.

The British succeeded in capturing the fort of Kulunga and dislodging Balabhadra with his men, women and children from it only when the water-supply of the besieged had fallen short. The lesson learnt from that campaign was not lost upon General Martindel. He directed his attention to the water-supply of the Jythuk garrison and he discovered

* Mill and Wilson, VIII., p. 22.

† Loc. Cit. I., 95-96.

that they depended for their supply of water upon wells situated at some distance below and exterior to the fort. Two detachments were formed to occupy different arms of the ridges as well as to cut off the water-supply of the garrison. Majors Richards and Ludlow were entrusted with the commands of these detachments.

Both these detachments met with defeats at the hands of the Gurkhas and had to retreat precipitately, leaving behind a very large number of officers and men among killed, wounded and prisoners. The English did not anticipate and were not prepared for the disaster. Professor H. H. Wilson writes:

"This repulse had a most mischievous effect upon the progress of the campaign, as General Martindel did not think himself competent to resume offensive measures until he was reinforced; and military operations in this quarter were consequently arrested."*

Thus closed the year 1814 upon this division, which had to record nothing but a chapter of defeats, disasters and reverses.

Of all the commanders, General Ochterlony alone did not show that incompetency and want of self-reliance and coolness of head which characterised others. He alone distinguished himself in this war and but for him it is not too much to say that the British would not have succeeded in bringing the war to a successful termination. Ochterlony was the Resident at Delhi and had adopted some of the Eastern vices, such as the keeping of a harem and a number of concubines. By these means he learnt that art of intrigue of which he was a past master. It was this knowledge which gave him an advantage with other British generals and officers. He spread the net of intrigues and ensnared some of the feudatory chiefs under the Nepalese government and thus with their help suceeeded in gaining his object.

Ochterlony was in charge of the most westernmost divison of troops that penetrated the Nepalese frontier from the Satlaj, by a pass less difficult than most of those further east, and was opposed to Amar Singh in person. From the left bank of the Satlaj, there rises a succession of mountains, on three of whose ranges the Gurkhas had built the forts of Nalagarh, Ramgarh and Malam. Between and beyond these ranges were fertile valleys in possession of chiefs who were tributaries to the Nepal government. It was the interest of Ochterlony to intrigue with them and tempt them to betray their suzerain, and he succeeded. One of them, the Raja of Hindur, very easily fell a victim to the machinations of the Christians. He became their ally and rendered them valuable services both by means of men and provisions.†

* Mill and Wilson, VIII., p. 26.

† In a footnote Captain Cunningham in his History of the Sikhs, writes:

"During the war of 1814 Sir David Ochterlony sometimes almost despaired of success; and, amid his vexations, he once at least recorded his opinion that the sepoys of the Indian army were unequal to the mountain warfare as was being waged. . . . . The most active and useful ally of the English during the war, was Raja Ramsurrun of Hindoor (or Nalagurh), the descendant of the Hurree Chand slain by Gooroo Govind, and who was himself the ready coadjutor of Sunsar Chund in many aggressions upon others, as well as in resistance to the Goorkhas. The venerable chief was still alive in 1846, and he continued to talk with admiration of Sir David Ochterlony and his 'eighteen pounders,' and to expatiate upon the aid he himself rendered in dragging them up the steeps of the Himalayas."

Ochterlony's division ascended the hills on the 31st of October and, resolving to put nothing to hazard, made a road with great labor, and sat himself down, with heavy guns, before Nalagarh on the 2nd of November. The garrisons of Nalagarh and Taragarh could not hold out against the superior force of their enemy, and so they were compelled to surrender on the 6th of November. There was, however, no cowardice on the part of the Gurkhas. What could these two garrisons, hardly five hundred strong, have done against 7,000 men ?

At Ramgarh, Amar Singh had taken his post. It was against him that the General directed his attention. By all accounts, Amar Singh had not more than 3,000 troops under him, whereas he was opposed to at least 7,000 troops under British officers. After capturing Nalagarh and Taragarh, Ochterlony made one week's preparations before he proceeded on the 13th of November against Ramgarh.

Amar Singh was more than a match for General Ochtrlony. It speaks volumes in favour of the military skill of this Gurkha general that with only 3,000 troops he not only kept the English general and his officers at bay, but inflicted heavy defeats on them. But in their hour of triumph, the Gurkhas did not fail to show that generosity to the vanquished, for which, the Hindus alone of all other nations of the earth are noted. Prinsep writes:

> "The Goorkas gave permission to remove and bury the dead, a courtesy they never refused during the war and not the only one we experienced at their hands."

The checks and repulses did not cow down the heart of Ochterlony, although at at this time, according to Prinsep, he

> "had serious doubts of our (British) ultimate success in the struggle, and he feared that our native army, with all its discipline, would be found ill-adapted to warfare in a country too rugged to admit of its superior tactics being brought to play. These apprehensions were, however, expressed to none but his commander-in-chief."

The Commander-in-Chief at this time was the Governor-General himself. As soon as he heard of the critical state of affairs, he determined to send reinforcements to General Ochterlony. It cannot be denied that Lord Hastings had not anticipated these disasters and reverses.

But before the arrival of the expected reinforcements, Ochterlony was deep in intrigues with the neighbouring chiefs.* He succeeded in winning over the Raja of Hindur,

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In another place of his work, the same author pays the following tribute to his memory: "Sir David Ochterlony will long live in the memory of the people of Northern India as one of the greatest of the conquering English chiefs; and he was the very last of the British leaders who endeared himself, both to the army which followed him and to the princes who bowed before the colossal power of his race."

* See J. C. Powell-Price's paper on "The operations leading to the Capture of Almora in 1815" in Journal of Indian History, Vol, IV. part I, pp. 101-110. Madras 1926. He writes: "It will be remembered that during the eighteenth century there had been considerable internal differences among the Kumaonis culminating in the invasion and conquest of the country by the Gurkhas.

"The latter's rule was very harsh and was much resented by the people; so much so indeed that the phrase 'Gurkha Raj' has become proverbial for oppression. This is important, as it explains the ease with which long lines of communication were held by the British during the operation.

whom he got to lend his exertions in making a road for artillery from Mukram, by Khundnee to Nahur, where he had for some time fixed his head-quarters.

He also intrigued with the Raja of Bilaspur and brought him also over to his side. Prinsep writes:

"This Raja, though connected with Umar Singh's family by a recent marriage, was induced at last, through fear of seeing his capital and country given over to another, to make his terms and submit."

Thus the Christian general had not only more than twice the number of troops than his Hindu opponent, but he succeeded in raising traitors in his opponents' camp, whom he tempted to betray their suzerain. But notwithstanding the possession of all these advantages, General Ochterlony had to remain idle during the winter months and made little progress towards accomplishing the object of the campaign before the beginning of the next April.

Prinsep is compelled to pay a tribute of praise to the military skill of Amar Singh in the following words:

"Umar Singh had fully justified the reputation he enjoyed as a soldier by the manner in which he met, and sometimes defeated, the sagacious plans of the British commander. Nothing decisive, indeed, had yet been done by either army: but, considering that the British had been reinforced to near seven thousand men, while Umar Singh had never more than two thousand eight hundred or at the most three thousand, this was the best possible proof of the skill with which he had availed himself of the advantage of ground, which was all he had to compensate for his numerical inferiority."

The other divisions which had assembled at Gorakhpur and Behar for the purpose of penetrating the Nepalese frontier from the east, also met with defeats and reverses, and some of the British generals showed such incompetency and cowardice that there was no other alternative left for the Governor-General than that of their removal from their respective commands. It is not necessary to minutely refer to the operations of these divisions or the defeats and reverses they sustained at the hands of their Hindu adversaries. Suffice it to say that such disasters had been almost unparalleled in the history of British India and every nerve was strained to increase the strength of all divisions so as to bring the war to a successful termination as soon as possible.

Regarding the critical state of affairs of the British, Prinsep writes:

"General Ochterlony alone had not been foiled. He was steadily pursuing his plan by slow and secure manoeuvres, but had yet gained no brilliant advantage over his equally cautious antagonist. General Martindel's division had failed there several times; twice before Nalapanee, and the third time in the attempt to take up positions before Jythuk. Moreover, the aggregate loss sustained by his division had amounted to a third of the number that originally took the field from Meeruth. The army assembled at Gourukpoor had allowed itself to retire before the enemy under circumstances amounting to a repulse; while, as we have seen, the Behar division, which was thought strong enough to have penetrated to Katmandoo, had lost two detachments of five hundred men each,

"In other theatres of the war the British troops had met with little success. The generals were, with a few exceptions, incompetent. In the Eastern theatre Major-Generals Marley and Wood had done nothing and the latter had actually deserted his troops in the field. General Gillespie had been killed near Dehra Dun, while General Ochterlony was held up further West."

without an equivalent success of any kind. From the frontier of Oudh to Rungpoor, our armies were completely held in check on the outside of the forest : while our territory was insulted with impunity and the most extravagant alarms spread through the country."

Notwithstanding all the advantages which the Gurkhas gained over the British, during the course of this war, they were obliged to act on the defensive and were unable to execute any offensive operations on account of their numerical inferiority and lack of that tact and knowledge to intrigue with and corrupt the officers and men under the British, as well as, it may be added, want of money, which is essentially necessary for carrying on offensive measures to any very large extent.

When the English found, to their cost, that they could not succeed by fair means, in bringing the war to a successful termination, they did not scruple to intrigue with the chiefs and men who were subject to the Nepalese Government and tempted them to throw off their allegiance to and betray their suzerain. Of course, it is a motto of the British that in love and war everything is justifiable, and so they did not stop to consider whether they were acting on that prayer which they were taught to offer to God everyday by Him whom they call their Saviour, "Father, lead us not into temptations, but deliver us from all evils." How Ochterlony intrigued with the Rajas of Hindur and Bilaspur has been already mentioned. Intrigues on a larger scale took place with the chiefs on the eastern boundary and centre of the Nepalese territories.

H. H. Wilson* writes:

"While the two divisions in Gorakhpur and Saran disappointed the calculations upon which they had been organised, the smaller body under Major Latter, in the same direction, had surpassed expectation and accomplished more than it was destined to attempt. Not only had the boundary east of the Kusi river been protected from insult but the Gurkhas had been driven from all their positions ; occupation had been taken of the province of Morang, and an alliance had been formed with a hill chief, the Raja of Sikim, a small state east of Nepal ; *which, ... gave the British a useful confederate, and additional means of acting upon the resources of the enemy.*

"Another element in the plan of the campaign, intended to take but a subordinate and contingent share, was equally attended with success, and was productive of highly important consequences. The province of Kumaon, forming the central part of the Gurkha conquests, was under the authority of a chief, Chautra Bam Sah, who was known to be disaffected to the ruling dynasty of Nepal : while the people of Kumaon, and the adjacent province of Garhwal, who had been subject to the Raja of Srinagar, but had been alienated by his tyrannical conduct and had consequently facilitated the Gurkha invasion, were now as hostile to their new and not less oppressive rulers, and *were anxious to transfer their allegiance to the British. No serious obstacles were thought likely, therefore, to impede the British possession of the country,* and its occupation was strongly recommended by its central situation."

Of course Wilson uses the language of occidental diplomacy, but the sentences which have been put in italics in the above clearly show the nature of the intrigues in which the English indulged. So the Governor-General determined to penetrate the Nepalese territory through Kumaon. The task of intriguing with the natives of that province was ably performed by Colonel Gardner. This British officer was one of those

* VIII., pp. 37-38.

military adventurers who flocked to the courts of the Indian princes towards the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. He entered Holkar's service in 1798; but a disagreement arose between him and his master and Gardner left him. The cause of the disagreement seems to have been the suspicion of treachery entertained by Holkar against Gardner, which was not altogether unfounded when we take into consideration the fact of his subsequently serving under the British Government and fighting against Holkar.

Gardner was a past master in the art of intrigue. He married an Indian lady of the Muhammadan persuasion and according to the rites of Islam. Thus his position in India was very critical and he had to indulge in intrigues in self-defence.

Having thus distinguished himself in the art of intrigue, he was chosen a tool for intriguing with the people of Kumaon by Lord Hastings. And, as said before, Gardner succeeded in his task.

It was some time before the Governor-General succeeded in assembling an army on the Kumaon frontier. The Nepalese Government had a frontier of over 600 miles to guard and, as mentioned before, they could not muster more than 12,000 men. The region of Kumaon, it would seem, was altogether neglected by the Gurkha government, for they never expected the British invasion of their territories from that quarter. It was this weak spot in the strategical situation of the Gurkhas which proved a source of strength to the English, who, however, would not have succeeded against the Gurkhas but for their underhand dealings and low intrigues.

Colonel Gardner having paved the way, a large force under Colonel Nicholls was despatched in April, 1815, to Kumaon, and, without much bloodshed, the provinces of Kumaon and Garhwal were taken possession of by the British. This was almost a foregone conclusion, because the loyalty and fidelity of the natives of those provinces to their rightful suzerain had been tampered with by the British, who resorted more to intrigue and fraud than to force in gaining their object.

The dismemberment of the fertile provinces of Kumaon and Garhwal by the British was the most severe blow suffered by the government of Nepal. The prestige of the British was retrieved and, had they been desirous of concluding peace with the Nepalese, there is every reason to believe that the latter would have, considering how traitors had been raised in their own camp, submitted to terms favourable to the British Government. But Lord Hastings was not in a mood for peace; he was desirous of wiping out the independent existence of the principality of Nepal. With this object in view, he increased the strength of all the divisions that were sent to operate against the Gurkhas.

The Gurkhas were not savages, they had some thing to teach in the art of warfare to the ever boastful natives of England. It was only when the English learnt the Gurkha method of warfare that the latter found themselves outmatched, not so much by the military tactics of their opponents as by their fraud and long purse. Prinsep* writes:

"It must be allowed to the Gurkhas that they were an experienced as well as a brave enemy: they had been continually waging war in the mountains for more than fifty years, and knew well

* Vol. I, p. 136.

how to turn every thing to the best advantage. Caution and judgment were, therefore, more required against them, than boldness of action or of decision ; . . . . "

"It will be perceived that little advance was made in the campaign until we had learnt to turn the same advantages to account against the enemy, by the help of which he foiled us so often at the commencement; for *with all the Indian warfare, combined with the professional science of Europe, our officers found yet something to learn from these Goorkhas. We adopted from them the plan of stockading posts, which the nature of the campaign frequently rendered it necessary to place beyond the limit of prompt support. , . . .*

Sir David Ochterlony has the merit of having first resorted to this plan. . . .

"The strength of the stockades was originally greatly miscalculated; made up of rough hewn wood and stones, heaped together between an inner and outer palisade, they were in appearance so contemptible as to invite assault without even seeming to require breaching . . . . The lighter artillery made little or no impression, and the difficulty of bringing up heavy guns, rendered them in truth, most formidable defences. The wood and materials for raising them were everywhere at hand, and the celerity with which they could be prepared in any position formed a main source of the strength of the country. *But this was a resource equally available to an invader, and one which placed the issue in the power of continuance, that is, in the length of the purse.*"

The sentences put in italics in the above extract clearly show the advantages which the English possessed over the Gurkhas in adopting the military tactics of the latter principally owing to the length of their purse. It does not require much intelligence to understand the causes which principally contributed to the success of the British over the Gurkhas. The latter could not boast of such a long purse as their enemy and, moreover, they were numerically inferior to him. Add to these, the wonderful capacity which the British possessed for intrigues and conspiracies and for raising traitors by holding out temptations and specious promises in the camp of their opponents, and no wonder need be expressed at their final triumph over the Gurkhas.

There is no necessity here to enter into details regarding all the battles fought before the first campaign against the Gurkhas was brought to an end. Suffice it to say that the result of the campaign was highly favourable to the British—a result which surpassed all their sanguine expectations and anticipations. What these were, will be related in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE NEPAL WAR.

THE SECOND CAMPAIGN.

It has been said that, had the Governor-General of India been bent upon peace, there would have been no difficulty in its accomplishment, for the Nepalese Government had been fully convinced of the uselessness of any struggle with an enemy whom they were unable to subdue. The sovereign of Nepal had sent his family priest, Guru Gujraj Misar, to the camp of the British political agent, Major Bradshaw, to sue for peace. Had generosity towards a fallen foe formed any part in the creed of the British, they would have succeeded in concluding peace without the loss of any more blood or treasure. But the Britishers who ruled India never displayed any generous feelings towards their fallen enemies. It was, therefore, too much to expect that Marquess Hastings would have easily acceded to the overture for peace made by the Nepalese. He demanded the following sacrifices from them:

1st. The perpetual cession of all the hill country taken in the campaign, *viz.*, from the Kalee westward.

2nd. A like cession of the entire Terai, from the foot of the outer hills along the whole line of the remaining territory of the Gurkhas.

3rd. The relinquishment by the Gurkhas of the footing they had gained in the territory of the Sikkim Raja and the surrender to that chief of the stockaded forts of Nagree and Nagarkot.

4th. The reception of a Resident, with the usual escort and establishment, at Katmandoo, and the customary stipulation not to receive or give service to Europeans without the special sanction of Government.

Like Shylock, the Marquess Hastings demanded from the Raja of Nepal the above sacrifices to the full. In vain did the Nepal Government ask the Governor-General to reconsider and modify his demands. Marquess Hastings knew fully well that his demands could not be acceded to by the proud Gurkhas without further fighting. It was just what he himself anticipated and desired, and therefore he kept the army in a state of equipment ready to take the field immediately on the return of the favourable season.

That astute Gurkha General, Amar Singh, with rare political sagacity and foresight rightly warned the Government of his country not to conclude peace with the British without further resistance. In March 1815, when he himself was besieged by the British Generals, he wrote a letter to the Court at Katmandu which was intercepted by the English. If this letter is not a forgery, it exacts admiration for the Gurkha General, for his having fully understood the nature of the enemy of his country. The points dwelt upon in this letter have been thus summarized by Prinsep :*

Vol. I, p. 192.

"Firstly. That a treaty concluded after defeat could not be trusted to, as the British knowing the terms to be conceded through fear, would presume upon the weakness of the nation, and seek new causes of quarrel, until its absolute subjugation was effected.

"Sacondly. That the constitution of the Gurkha power, which held several subordinate Rajas and nations in subjection, would afford the British numberless occasions of interference; and that they would thus by intrigue, during peace, effectually weaken and undermine the dominion estab-blished.

Thirdly. The danger of allowing a Resident to be permanently fixed at Katmandoo, is particularly dwelt upon as likely to lead to the introduction of a subsidiary force, and to prove a preliminary step to absolute subjection.

"Fourthly. The advantage of manful resistance as, opposed to concession and submissivenes, is strongly urged, from the prosperity enjoyed by the Bhurtpoor Raja since his successful defence of that fortress, contrasted with the utter ruin by which Tippoo Sultan was overtaken, after the concessions made by him to effect the peace signed by Lord Cornwallis in 1790."

It cannot be denied that this Gurkha warrior had properly judged the character of the assailants of his country. If the British Government of India were not inclined to conclude peace, the Nepalese also were not overanxious to accept the humiliating terms offered to them, by their enemy. The recurrence of hostilities was therefore inevitable, and so in the beginning of the year 1816, the second campaign of the Nepal War commenced. This campaign was of short duration, for it was not possible for a small power like that of Nepal to carry on hostilities with their wealthy and unscrupulous opponents. By the beginning of March 1816, the Nepal War came to an end and a treaty was concluded on terms very advantageous to the British. Although Nepal was not annexed, yet the Gurkhas were crushed never to rise again. As a result of the Nepal War, Prinsep.* has truly observed that

"Its effect has been to shut out the Nepalese from any ambitious views of aggrandizement to the east, and to circumscribe their territorry on three sides by the British power, while on the fourth, the stupendous range of the Himalaya, and the Chinese frontier, present an effectual barrier. Thus, while the British and Chinese empires continue in their present strength, ;the hope of extending their dominion must be extinguished, and the military spirit, which was fostered by the series of victories gained over the surrounding Rajas, must die away for want of employment."

Not only were the Gurkhas crushed as a military nation, but since the establishment of a British resident at the Court of Nepal,

"The records of Nepal furnish little of interest, except a history of intestinal struggles for power between the Thapa and Panre factions, and futile attempts at forming combinations with other states in Hindustan against the British."†

It also seems probable that the Marquess of Hastings was anxious to go to war with Nepal, because he know that by defeating the Nepalese, the British would become masters of the pleasant Himalayan heights and valleys which in time they could settle and colonize. H. H. Wilson writes:

"Under a climate more congenial to European organisation than the sultry plains of India, and with space through which they may freely spread, the descendants of a northern race may be able to aggregate and multiply; and if British colonies be ever formed in the east, with a chance of

* Vol. I. p. 207.

† Wright's History of Nepal, p. 54.

preserving the moral and physical energies of the parent country, it is to the vales and mountains of the Indian Alps that we must look for their existence,—it will be to the Gurkha war that they will trace their origin."*

Appendix to Chapter XLVIII.

The Nepal War has formed the subject of study of several British military officers. Thus the articles of Colonel W. G. Hamilton. D. S. O, in the *United Service Journal* for July 1903 and April 1912, and that of Colonel L. W. Shakespeare, in the same journal for October 1912, deserve special mention. These officers have given the authorities whom they have consulted in preparing their contributions. Colonel Hamilton specially relied on "Papers respecting the Nepal War printed in conformity to the resolution of the Court of Proprietors of the East India stock, of the 3rd March 1824," These papers "form a valuable mine of information on the subject."

Colonel Shakespeare relied on the following books, *viz.*,

Life of Rollo Gillespie ;

Memoirs of Gillespie, by Egerton and Thorne ;

Military History of the Nepal War ;

Narative of Nepal, by Capt. T. H. Smith, P. A. in Nepal, 1841 ;

Records, 53rd foot.

Colonel Hamilton attributes the British success in the war to Ochterlony, "whose fame rests mainly on his outstanding qualities as a commander and leader of men in the Nepal War,' and to one "Dr. Rutherford, who provided the best and most accurate information regarding the Gurkha army, its leaders, organisation and fighting value, and the topography of Kumaon and Gurhwal." He was the trade agent for the Company and civil surgeon at Moradabad. He employed "Pandits, Gurkhali soldiers and others, as paid spies." So "his services in the Kumaon campaign were invaluable, but his equal does not appear to have been found elsewhere, while his sound advice and opinions expressed before the war do not appear to have carried the conviction they deserved."

"Ochterlony brought himself into touch with native life in a way which, though not uncommon a hundred years ago, hardly commends itself to the moral sense of more recent days. In private life he dressed and lived as a native of India, while a harem (the inmates of which were not always affectionately subservient) formed part of his domestic establishment."

Colonel Shakespeare pays a tribute to the gallant Gurkha soldiers in the following terms :

"Unlike other Asiatic enemies the Nepalese showed a remarkable spirit of courtesy towards us, worthy of a more enlightened people. The cases of poisoned wells or arrows, or cruelty to wounded, are only recorded in one or two cases, no rancourous spirit of revenge appeared to animate them, they fought in fair conflict like men, and abstained from insulting the bodies of dead or wounded. In no case was there any interference with the dismal duty of collecting the casualties at the close of an action."

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* Vol. VIII, pp. 59-60.

The British offcers and men did not receive any medals for taking part in the war with Nepal. The same officer writes:

"It is curious to note that this war, which lasted in its first phase from October 1814 to May 1815, and in its second phase from January 1816 to May that year, was full of hard fighting, losses, and hard work, produced no medals, nor is it inscribed on the war honours of the numbers of regiments, English and Native, who took part in it. How different to the lavish distribution of such in our day."

The first hill war in India should have been more handsomely commemorated than it evidently was by the Company's Government of that period.

Regarding the wisdom of Amar Singh Thapa, Colonel Shakespeare writes:

"It is also worthy of note that Amar Singh's policy of keeping out the English at all costs from Nepal, so gravely impressed by him on the Durbar then, is still kept up; and who shall say that he was not wise?"

CHAPTER XLIX

TREATY WITH CUTCH

. Lord Hastings extended the British influence in thc Bombay Presidency by concluding a treaty with Cutch and thus bringing it under the protection of the East India Company. Cutch is a small principality ruled by Jareja Rajputs and as it is bounded on the North by Sindh and on the East and South by Kathiawad, the language there spoken is a mixture of Sindhi and Gajarati, and having the Arabian Sea on the West, its inhabitants are a daring maritime people. During the war in Nepal, free-booters from this principality raided some parts of Kathiawad, which at that time owned allegiance to the Peshwa and the Gaekwar, who were in alliance with the British, to whom it thus served as a pretext to despatch a force under Colonel East to Cutch, who without difficulty captured the fortress of Anjar. Soon afterwards, in 1816, a treaty was entered into with the ruling prince, by which Cutch became a feudatory state. It was thus that the Company's frontier was advanced to the mouths of the Indus.

The ruling prince of Cutch, it would seem, very readily entered into an allianee with the English, because, otherwise the latter would have helped the Amirs of Sindh, who it was said, contemplated the conquest of Cutch, and for this object they solicited the aid of the English when the mission was sent to them by Lord Minto in 1809.

CHAPTER L

THE PINDARI WAR

The taste of blood whetted the appetite for more. The Nepal War, however iniquitous in its origin, ended in a manner highly advantagous to the British Government of India. They became masters of territories several hundreds of miles in extent, and of revenues estimated at 7 or 8 figures in ruppees per annum. Emboldened by the success in the war with Nepal, coffers of state well replenished with loot and indemnity moneys, Lord Hastings did not let the grass grow under his feet before he was seen preparing for war on a scale unprecedented in the annals of British India. He tried his best to make the population of India believe that all his preparations were meant to to crush the Pindaris: but no prophet was necessary to come and tell them the real motives which actuated the Governor-General in undertaking the projected war.

That the Pindaris* were a sort of unpaid militia or reservists will be evident from the following passage extracted from Malcom's Report on Central India.†

"During the time of Mulhar Row and Tukajee Holkar, the Pindarries, who always encamped separately, had, when within the Maratha territories and not permitted to plunder, an allowance which averaged four annas, or a quarter of a rupee, a day; and the further supported themselves by employing their small horses and bullocks in carrying grain, forage and wood, for which articles the Pindarry bazar was the great mart. When let loose to pillage, which was always the case some days before the army entered an enemy's country, all allowances stopped."

It is clear then that the Pindaris were not robbers or freebooters, but they formed the militia, reservists or auxiliaries of the regular Maratha forces in the time of their taking the field. If we remember this fact, we shall be in a position to know their true character and why the Maratha princes were so unwilling to withdraw their patronage from them.

Before we proceed to describe the war which brought about their annihilation, it is necessary to trace the rise and progress of the Pindaris.

No satisfactory etymology** has been traced of the term Pindari. Malcolm writes that "The most popular one among the natives is that they derived it from their dissolute habits, leading them constantly to resort to the shops of the sellers of an intoxicated drink termed Pinda." (*Ibid.*, p. 433, f. n.)

In the history of northern India, there is no mention of the Pindaris, but in the history of the Deccan we read that in the latter part of the reign of Aurangzeb, that is about 1689, a Pindari named Poonapah is mentioned as an auxiliary of the Marathas. But when the Maratha Empire was in the zenith of its power, or when anarchy had not broken out in the territories which owned allegiance to the rule of the Marathas,

* See Origin of the Pindaris—Allahabad reprint.

† Vol. 1, p. 436 of 2nd Edition.

** Messrs. Yule and Burnell have inserted a long dissertation on the term *Pindary* in their *Hobson-Jobson* (New edition, edited by William Crook. London 1903. pp. 711—713).

the Pindaris had not gained that name for ferocity and perpetration of cruelties with which their character is represented by English writers. It was in Central India that their existence attracted the notice of the Government of India and measures were concerted to encompass their ruin. It will, therefore, be necessary to narrate their history since their first settlement in that part of India.

The leaders of the Pindaris were mostly Afghans by nationality and military adventurers by profession. There was no lack of these Pathan adventurers in the army of Shivaji. One of them named Nasru, was a Jamadar under him. His son Chekun also filled the same station and was the father of Ghaziuddin, who may be described as the progenitor of the race of Pindaris of Central India. The Peshwa Baji Rao the first tried to extend the boundaries of the Maratha kingdom by attacking Malwa, which till then had formed part of the Mughal Empire of Delhi. Ghaziuddin was in the service of this Maratha leader and died when employed with a detachment at Ujjain. Of his two sons, Gurdi Khan and Shah Baz Khan, the former was taken in the service of Mulhar Rao Holkar, and accompanied him on his expedition to Hindustan. His duty was to harass the enemy and lay waste his country. Mulhar Rao Holkar was so pleased with the manner in which he performed his duty that he presented him with a Zeree or golden flag which was the means of attracting many other freebooters and Pathans, and thus Gardi Khan increased his followers. On his death, he was succeeded in the leadership of the Pindaris by his son Lal Mohamad, who left it to his son Imam Baksh. But the latter was not a capable leader and was therefore superseded by one named Kadar Baksh. Besides him, there were two other Pindaris of note, named Tuku and Bahadur Khan, attached to the family of Holkar when the Pindari war broke out. These Pindaris were known as Holkar Shahi or adherents of Holkar.

The other Maratha prince of Central India—Sindhia—was not without his Pindari adherents. It has been mentioned above that of the two sons of Ghaziuddeen Gardi Khan was taken in the service of Mulhar Rao Holkar. The second son, Shah Baz Khan, entered the service of Ranoji Sindhia and followed his fortunes. He was killed in an action at Tonk. His two sons—Hira and Burran—were distinguished Pindari leaders in the army of Madhoji Sindhia. Hira was succeeded on his death in the command of the Pindaris by his two sons Dost Mahomad and Wasil Mahomad. It wae Wasie Mahomad whose incursion into the British territories served as a pretext for the Government of India to go to war with the Pindaris.

Burran's son Dadar Baksh did not succeed to any authority. But one Dubla Jamadar became leader of the Pindaris who were under the command of Burran. Rajun became the nominal head of the Pindaris on the death of his father Dubla Jamadar, but it was Chitu, whom the latter had adopted as his son, who became their leader. The origin and early history of Chitu are involved in obscurity. He is said to have been a native of Mewat in Rajputana, a Jat by birth. He was purchased during a famine and then afterwards adopted by Dubla Jamadar, as mentioned above. He was an able man, and on the death of Dubla Jamadar, succeeded to his command and was honored with the title of Nawab by Dowlat Rao Sindhia and granted a Jagir.

Another well-known Pindari leader in the service of Dowlat Rao Sindhia was Karim Khan. He was a Pathan by birth, was equally with Chitu honored with the title of Nawab and granted a Jagir by Dowlat Rao Sindhia.

Thus it will be seen that Dowlat Rao possessed a larger number of Pindari adherents than Holkar, in whose service, except Amir Khan, there was no other Pindari leader of note.

The Pindaris, as said so often before, formed the auxiliary forces of the Maratha Chiefs of Central India and after the Second Maratha War their services were requisitioned because the policy adopted by Sir George Barlow towards the princes of India was one calculated to make them go to war with one another and cut each other's throat. It was more in self-defence than in any thing else that the Maratha princes had to entertain the Pindaris as irregular forces. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the entertainment of the Pindaris was a new institution and, therefore, it could be done away with at a moment's notice from the British Government. The Pindaris had been in existence for a century and more and served very useful purposes in the military organization of the Marathas. Their annihilation was demanded, because they are said to have committed ravages in the districts under the government of the British. Let us see how far this is borne out by facts.

That for a long time the Pindaris respected the persons and properties of the British and their subjects is a fact which no one can deny. Grant Duff's testimony to this may be mentioned. Amir Khan, a well-known freebooter, was patronized and encouraged by the British to commit all sorts of excesses.

The Pindaris are said to have twice given trouble to the British Government of India—once in 1808-9, when they entered Guzerat, and again in 1812, when they devastated Mirzapur and Shahabad. But on these two occasions no step seems to have been taken by the English Government to punish them and it seems to us that the Pindaris also did not mean to come to blows with the British Government. They might have imitated the dacoits and thus entered the British territories. But they did not seem to have committed much mischief. It was not until they were provoked to do so by the British themselves that any Pindari horde committed those ravages in British Districts which were proclaimed to the world as a pretext for the British to go to war with them. It was in October 1815 that a party of Pindaris was first attacked my Major Fraser, who was in command of the Nizam's reformed Infantry and was accompanied by about a hundred horse.

It is said that the Pindaries had meditated an attack on the Southern Provinces of British India and therefore it was only expedient on the part of the British Indian Government to have ordered Major Fraser to attack them. It is difficult to say what were the intentions of the Pindaris, but there can be no doubt that the latter were now provoked to attack the British territories. The party of the Pindaris routed by Major Fraser proceeded to the banks of the Krishna river, committing depredations all along the route.

The Pindaris knew that the British Government were bent on their destruction and, therefore, committed all sorts of depredations in the territories of the British and of their

ally, the Nizam. Some of the places in the Madras Presidency were plundered by them and the amount of the loot is said to have been so considerable that merchants from Ujjain were sent for to purchase many of the valuables obtained.

But we must not place much credence on what the British writers say as to the cruelties and ravages committed by the Pindaris on men, women and children of the British territories. That the Pindaris were not demons but men with humane feelings and generous impulses may be gathered from the following incident casually mentioned by Malcolm in his celebrated report on Cenral India:

"It is a remarkable fact," writes Sir John Malcolm, "and one of the few creditable to the late community of the Pindaries that among the numerous prisoners of all ages and sexes whom they took, though they employed them as servants, gave them to their chiefs and accepted ransoms for them from their relations, they never sold them into bondage, nor carried on like the Brinjarries, a traffic in slaves.

If they could have been so humane and generous to their prisoners, it is difficult to believe all the cruelties and acts of savagery which have been laid at their door by British writers of Indian history. Of course, the Government of India were making a case against the Pindaris, in order to justify their waging the war, and, as such being the case, we should make allowances for all the statements of the English charging the Pindaris with atrocities and cruelties.

The real motive which actuated the British Indian Government to destroy the Pindaris is mentioned by Prinsep, who, in his History of the Political and Military Transactions in India during the administration of the Marquess of Hastings, thus writes on the subject:

"Their actual condition at the period (1814), entitled them to be regarded as a distinct political interest of the day, requiring an equal exertion of vigilance and circumspection as Hyder in the height of his power and inveterate animosity. These materials form the groundwork of an interest formidable at least to our repose, if not to our safety: and its centrical situation in India, nearly equidistant from the dominions of the three presidencies, imposed the necessity of the most extensive annual precautions of defence, in spite of which the territories of our allies were continually overrun."*

The same author also observes that the entertainment of the Pindaris might have made the Maratha princes strong, which was, of course, not desirable for the British power in India.

"It is by no means improbable," writes Prinsep, "that the Mahratta states viewed the increase of the Pindaries with an eye to eventual service from their arms; for they avowedly attributed the disasters of the operations of 1803 to their having imitated the European mode of warfare, and affected to believe, that had they adhered to the Parthian method of their ancestors, the results of the contest would have been very different."†

But, as said so often before, the Pindaris formed a sort of auxiliary force in the military organization of the Maratha princes and it was not easy for them to destroy the Pindaris within a moment's notice from the Government of India. The increase in the number of the Pindaris is to be attributed to the anarchy and disorder which

* Vol. I, pp. 33—34.

† *Ibid.*, p. 32.

reigned supreme in the native states of India, as a result of Barlow's policy towards them. That administrator considered that the safety of British rule in India consisted in making the native states wage war against each other and fight amongst themselves. It was then this Machiavellian policy of Barlow to which must be attributed the increase in the number of the Pindaris : for it was in self-defence that the Maratha princes had to entertain their services.

But no greater mistake could be committed than that into which Prinsep has fallen in attributing the plundering expedition of the Pindaris in the British territories to the instigation of the Maratha Princes. The above-named author writes :

"It was an insidious kind of hostiliry, thus under the mask of friendship and professions of attachment, to instigate the attacks of these irresponsible, unacknowledged bands ; but it is not on that account the less likely to have been suggested by the hatred and fears of the Mahratta chiefs, or recommended by their notions of morality."*

Now, this is all gratuitous presumption on the part of the writer, for which there is not a tittle of evidence. The arguments adduced in support of the above presumption may be better stated in his own words :

It would seem that the Pindari leaders had this season (1815) come to a resolution to respect the territories of the Mahratta chiefs, and to direct their ravages chiefly, if not exclusively, against those of the Nizam and of the British Government. This had been publicly given out in the hordes : and some of the few stragglers that were left behind and taken, stated the same thing on their examinations. Such a resolution may have been the result of the secret negotiations carried on by the Mahratta agents, particularly Balajee Koonjur, a person of high repute and formerly a minister of the Peshwa. This man, having left Poona some years before in apparent disgrace, had latterly visited all the Mahratta Courts, where he was received with marked attention, and evidently had some important business in hand. He was known to have had communication with the Pindaries, on his way to Nagpoor from Sindhia's camp, in the early part of 1815 ; and from that city he went to Cheetoo's cantonment at Nemawar, as if purposely to make them a party to the intrigue he was 'conducting."†

The evidence of Balaji Kunjar's having instigated the Pindaris is not only very meagre but totally unreliable. The reasons for the incursion of the Pindaris into the British territories have been already mentioned before. There was enough provocation for the course which they adopted and it seems that they acted in self-defence.

The statement of "the few stragglers," even if true, which we doubt, cannot amount to much.

Again, it was the Pindari adherents of Sindhia who are said to have committed depredations in the British territories. Hence it follows that the British should have asked Sindhia to punish his Pindaris. But this they did not do. Moreover, if it was their object to crush those Pindaris who had committed ravages in their territories and were known to have been professed adherents of the House of Sindhia, the British should have invaded the territories of Sindhia alone in order to crush his Pindaris. But their warlike preparations were out of all proportion to the object against which they were directed. The Pindaris of the day were robbers, and so were the dacoits.

* *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 334.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 334.

The one had their headquarters in the native states, the other in British territories. No *warlike preparations on any large scale were undertaken against the dacoits, as they* were against the Pindaris. Hence it follows that in proclaiming the war against the Pindaris the British had some ulterior object in view.

Prinsep writes further on :

"If any proof were wanting, that these enterprises of the Pindaries were undertaken in concert with the Mahratta power, it might be found in the circumstance of the latter having afterwards chosen the particular moment of our prosecuting measures for the suppression of the predatory associations, to rise themselves against the British supremacy. Without some assurance of such support, whenever our strength should be put forth against them, the Pindary leaders would scarcely have commenced, at this particular juncture, a plan of systematic depredation, pointedly aimed at the only power they had reason to fear."*

The analysis of the involved reasonings contained in the above sentences yields the following :

1. The Maratha powers were in league with the Pindaris, otherwise they would not have risen against the British when the latter proclaimed the Pindari War.

2. The Pindaris expected support from the Maratha powers, therefore they commenced their plan of *systematic depredations in the British territories at a time when the British were making* preparations for the war against the Pindaris

The above reasonings of Prinsep carry their own refutation with them. The Pindaris might or might not have expected help from the Maratha princes. But they had received provocation from the British and, moreover, they had good reasons to believe that the latter meditated their destruction. Under these circumstances it was but natural for them to have taken the course they adopted, and overrun the British territories.

The Maratha princes were not taken into the confidence of the British and were not consulted as to the measures which the latter had contemplated for the destruction of the Pindaris. They were alarmed at the warlike preparations and were justified in believing that the British meant to wage war against them. In self-defence they rose against the British. That they had good grounds for this will be narrated in the following pages.

Ibid., ,Vol. I, p. 335.

CHAPTER LI.

THE PINDARI WAR (*Continued.*)

In his *Private Journal*, dated February 1, 1814, the Marquess of Hastings wrote :

"To us the Pindarries are no eventual resource, for a stipulation in their engagement is invariably an unlimited right of plunder ; an atrocity to which no extremity could make us give countenance."*

In a previous chapter, it has been shown that it was the policy of the East India Company's Government in India to encourage the Pindaris—nay to engage them for creating disturbances in the territories of those princes who were not on friendly terms with them.

But the Marquess of Hastings found that it did not pay the Company to avail themselves of the services of the Pindaris. Hence he wrote in his diary what has been quoted above.

In proclaiming the war against the Pindaris, the British Government, as said before, had ulterior designs. Lord Wellesley and his successor had to hurriedly conclude treaties with the Maratha princes, because it was impossible to any longer prosecute the war against them with advantage. True it is that Lord Lake chased Jaswunt Rao Holkar, but the power of that Maratha prince was not crushed. In fact in most of the early battles with him, the British came off second best. Again, the siege of Bharatpur hardly redounded to the credit of the British army. The failure of the British in all these expeditions must be attributed to a certain extent to their want of knowledge of Central India. The topography of that portion of India being unknown to the British, it was not possible for them to carry on military operations with success. Central India was to a great extent a *terra incognita* to them ; hence they were obliged to cease from war.

But at the time when the Marquess of Hastings assumed the Governor-Generalship of India, a great change had come over the aspect of affairs. It is questionable if he would have undertaken the task of annihilating the Pindaris, had he not come to possess a thorough knowledge of the country which was to be the scene of bloodshed and murder. The man who made his Lordship acquainted with the geography of that *terra incognita* now known as Central India deserves more than a passing notice.

After the conclusion of the Second Maratha war, the embassy sent to Sindhia in 1805 under Mr. Graeme Mercer, possessed in its rank a young officer who was a native of Scotland, and who in after years became well-known in the literary world as Colonel James Tod.

This officer was born in 1782. At the age of 17 or 18, he came out to India as a cadet in the military service of the East India Company. After serving for about 22 or 23 years, he retired from India in 1823 and died in his native land in 1835.

* P. 24, Panini Office reprint.

From 1806 to 1823, he was employed in Rajputana at first to survey it and afterwards as political agent there. The nature of his services in that province will be evident from the following extract from the Annual Biography and Obituary for 1835:

"Almost immediately upon his arrival in that country, ...he began its survey, the details of which he has stated in the Memoir, and the result is given in the magnificent map which graces the *Annals*. In the maps prior to this survey, Rajputana was almost a total blank: nearly all the western and central states were wanting : the rivers were supposed to have a southerly course into the Nerbudda, and the position of the two capitals (the ancient and the modern) of Mewar, was precisely reversed ; . . . . .The map of Colonel Tod was completed in 1815, and presented to the Marquis of Hastings : . . . .*The map was of vast utility to the Government, being made one of the foundations of Lord Hastings' plan of operations in the year 1817.*

"His surveys were continued without interruption, except by his indefatigable researches into the history and antiquities of the Rajput States, till 1817, when he was appointed political agent of government, having the sole control over the five principalities of Rajasthan : Mewar, Marwar, Jessulmer, Kotah, and Boondi."

The policy which was adopted towards the states of Central India by the Government of India has already been narrated. Tod, it seems, took advantage of the situation, by trying to produce in the minds of the Rajputs bitter hatred against the Marathas as well as Mahomedans. It was considered a matter of political expediency that the Rajputs, Marathas and the Mughals should not unite and make common cause against the British. Tod tried his best to bring about this state of affairs. It should be remembered that the Marathas would not have succeeded in gaining a rood of land in Central India but for the help which they received from the Rajput princes. Malcolm, in his Memoir of Central India, truly observes

"that the Rajput princes and chiefs of Jeypoor, Marwar, Mewar and Malwa, were either secretly or openly the supporters of the Mahratta invaders, to whose first invasion of Malwa, we are told by every Persian or Hindu writer that notices the subject, hardly any opposition was given ; and we possess many testimonies to show, that they chiefly attributed their success, on this occasion, to the action of religious feeling."*

The above-named author has alluded to the correspondence that took place between the Rajput Prince Raja Jai Singh and the Peshwa Bajirao the first. He writes :

"The celebrated Raja Jey Singh, prince of Jeypoor, greatly contributed to the conquest of Malwa and indeed of Hindustan, by the Mahrattas. The correspondence between this chief and the first Bajirao, would, if obtained, throw light upon this period of history. It is said to have commenced in a communication very characteristic of the times and the parties :—the ruler of the Mahratta State sent a verse of the Purana to Jeysingh which may be literally translated—'Thou art like the cloud which drinketh the waters of the sea, and returneth them with thunder to fertilize the earth. The mountains, in dread of Indra, fly to thee for protection. Thou art the tree of desires. Thou art the sea whence springeth the tree of desires. Who can tell thy depth ? I have no power to describe the depth of the ocean : but in all thy actions remember Agastya Moonee'."†

According to Hindu mythology, the sage Agastya Muni drank up the sea. The communication, therefore, though flattering, conveyed a metaphorical but distinct warning of what might happen, if he opposed the Brahmin sway.

* *Loc. Cit., Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 53.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

"Jai Singh's answer, taken from the same sacred volume, was as follows :

"If the offspring of Brahma sin with me, I forgive them. This pledge I hold sacred. It was of no consequence that Agastya Moonee drank up the sea ; but if God should doom the walls that retain the ocean to be thrown down, then the world would be destroyed, and what would become of Agastya Moonee ?"*

Raja Jai Singh's meraphorical language was not difficult for the Peshwa to understand. It was a warning of the consequences that would ensue from breaking down long-established authority. It need hardly be said that the Peshwa and his successors always tried their best not to destroy the ancient houses of the reigning princes of Rajputana. Of course, Sindhia and Holkar, and their mercenary bands, perhaps at the instigation of the British Government of India, often fought with and plundered the Rajput princes, but they stopped short of their total annihilation.

It was reserved for Tod to enlarge on this aspect of affairs, to paint the Marathas in the blackest color possible and to represent the Rajput princes as the aggrieved and injured party. *In an article in the first volume of the Journal of the Puna Sarvajanik Sabha* under the heading of Maratha Bakhars or chronicles and Grant Duff's History Marathas, which there are good reasons to believe was penned by the well-known Mr. Justice Ranade, the criticism on Tod as an historian is so very just, that it is reproduced below:

"He (Colonel Tod) has one measure of justice for the Rajputs, another for their Mahomedan and Maratha conquerors. He will speak with praise of a miserable and unprovoked raid by a Rajput chief, but has nothing but hard words to use when he has to describe perhaps a more excusable act of power on the part of the other nationalities. This partiality to his pet race leads the historian to render less than justice to the other nationalities, and to none more so than to the Marathas."

Tod was not content with abusing only the Marathas, but did not even spare one of the greatest, best and noblest of all the monarchs who ruled over India, of whose authentic history there is no doubt. If we are to believe Tod, Akbar the Great was the veriest incarnation of the devil who ever ruled India.

For our own part, we are inclined to the belief that Tod did all these to foment dissensions between the Rajputs on the one hand, and Marathas and Mugals on the other, and thus prevent for ever their making any common cause. There may be after all some truth in what he was accused of by his co-religionists and compatriots. It was alleged against him that he was corrupt and used to take bribes from the princes of Rajputana. Of course, the writer of the biographical sketch from which an extract has already been given above comes to his defence and says:

"We have some reason to think that the elevation of a person of Colonel Tod's military rank to a post not merely high, but to which so much power and authority was attached, gave umbrage to the late Sir David Ochterlony, who might feel that Colonel Tod's appointment trenched upon his powers in the country. Surrounded, as Sir David always was, with natives, it is not to be wondered at if some of them breathed that calumny upon the purity of Colonel Tod's political conduct to which Bishop Heber rather indiscreetly alludes."....

A man of Sir David Ochterlony's position would not have recklessly made a state-

* *Ibid.*, p. 55.

ment casting reflections on the conduct of a brother officer without being convinced of the truthfulness and justification of his allegation. Every one knows how difficult it is to prove such a charge as the one which Ochterlony preferred against Tod. That gallant knight must have been morally certain, although there was not sufficient legal evidence to bring the charge home against Tod.

The Governor-General, armed with the map of Central India and quite sanguine that the Rajput princes would remain neutral, nay would even help the British, assembled troops ostensibly to crush the Pindaris, but in reality the Maratha sovereigns. Prinsep even goes to the length of not only hinting but plainly putting it in black and white that the Pindaris were instigated by the Maratha princes to commit ravages in the British territories. He writes:

"It was an insidious kind of hostility, thus, under the mask of friendship and professions of attachment, to instigate the attacks of these irresponsible, unacknowledged bands; but it is not on this account the less likely to have been suggested by the hatred and fears of the Marhatta chiefs, or recommended by their notions of morality. If any proof were wanting, that these enterprises of the Pindaries were undertaken in concert with the Mahratta powers, it might be found in the circumstance of the latter having afterwards chosen the particular moment of our prosecuting measures for the suppression of the predatory associations, to rise themselves against the British supremacy."*

From the above extract, it appears Prinsep bases his presumption of the Pindaris being instigated by the Maratha princes on the fact of the latter going to war with the British at a time when they had assembled troops ostensibly with the object of crushing the Pindaris. He adduces no arguments, brings no evidence in support of his statement. It has already been stated before that the Pindaris had been provoked to commit depredations in British territories by the latter trying to pursue and punish them. Even if they had not been provoked to do so, it is a gratuitous presumption on the part of the above-named author to say that the Maratha princes were in league with the Pindaris because they themselves rose against the British supremacy at the moment when measures were being prosecuted for the suppression of the predatory associations. There is no iota of evidence to support this presumption.

The Maratha princes rose because they were alarmed by the warlike preparations of the British and because they had not been taken into confidence and consulted as to the measures that should be pursued for the destruction of the Pindaris. They concluded that all the preparations were meant to be directed against them. They suspected, nay believed this, and it cannot be denied that they had good and strong grounds for this.

Kaye, in his life and correspondence of Malcolm, has tried to prove, and no unprejudiced reader can say that he has failed to do so, that the warlike preparations of the British were directed against the Maratha princes.

"Our military preparations" writes Sir John Kaye, "were on so grand a scale that these threatening appearances at the native courts were regarded fearlessly by all, hopefully by many. The magnificent army, or, rather the two magnificent armies which had taken the field, were equal to any human emergency that could arsie......

* *Loc. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 334.

"Let the reader place before him any map of India, and contemplate the expanse of country lying between the Kistnah and the Ganges rivers. Let him glance from Puna in the south-west to Cawnpore in the north-east : mark the positions of the principal native courts, and think of the magnificent armies, the very flower of the three presidencies, which were spreading themselves over that spacious territory, closing in upon Hindustan and the Deccan and compassing alike the Pindaree hordes and the substantive states in their toils. The sportsmen of the day, indeed, regarded it as a grand *battue* of the princes and chiefs of India ; and we cannot be surprised if those princes and chiefs looked upon the matter somewhat in the same light, and thought that the Feringhees, after a long season of rest, were now again bracing themselves up for vigorous action, and were putting forth all their immense military resources in one comprehensive effort to sweep the native principalities from the face of the earth.

"The Mahratta was roused. He had been uneasy. He was now alarmed.....

"So it was, it appears to me, with the Peishwa and the Raja of Berar. They were alarmed by the gathering and the advance by our armies. They did not believe that these immense military preparations had been made simply for the suppression of the Pindaries. They thought that whatever the primary and ostensible object of the campaign might be—a campaign conducted by the Governor-General himself in person, at the head of the grand army, it would eventually be directed against the substantive Mahratta States. And this was no baseless suspicion. The probability of another Marhatta war, as the sequel of the Pindaree campaign, was the subject of elaborate state papers, and the small gossip of our camps. Statesmen solemnly discussed it at the council-board, and soldiers joyously predicted it at the mess-table......It would have been wonderful if, under such circumstances, there had not been another war; if, considering the character of these princes, the evil councillors by whom they were surrounded, and their limited understanding of the views and intentions of the British Government, they had not regarded the movements of our armies with suspicion and alarm, and concerted the means of resisting our propable aggressions. They had at least as good a right to prepare for contingencies as we had. If, when the British Government first took up arms, and calculated the scale on which it would be expedient to conduct its military aspirations, the contingency of a Marhatta war was duly provided for, and that provision is to be considered demonstrative only of wisdom and forethought, we must be surely blinded by our national self-love, if we would denounce as treachery, or as folly, a like provision on the part of the Marhattas, who were in much greater danger than ourselves. We cannot surely expect all the world to dismount their guns whilst our own are loaded and primed and the portfire is burning in our hands."*

That the Governor-General was of a perfidious character, that the proclamation against the Pindaris was merely a contrivance to deceive people and prevent them from knowing his real intention, which was to wage war on the Maratha princes, will be evident from the order which he issued to his troops after signing the treaty with Dowlat Rao Sindhia. The Governor-General was sorry that there was no war with that Maratha sovereign. His order ran as follows:

"The Governor-General has great pleausure in announcing to the army that the Maharajah Dowlat Rao Sindhia, has signed a treaty, by which his Highness engages to afford every facilitation to the British troops in their pursuit of the Pindaries through his dominions, and to co-operate actively towards the extermination of these brutal free-booters. In consequence, the troops and country of his Highness are to be regarded as those of an ally. *The generous confidence and animated zeal of the army may experience a shade of disappointment in the diminished prospect of serious exertion;* but the Governor-General is convinced that the reflection of every officer and soldier in the army will satisfy him that the carrying every point by equity and moderation is the proudest triumph for the British character."

* *Loc. Cit.*, Vol. II. p. 187.

With reference to this order, Kaye truly observes :

"It proves how little he (Lord Hastings) desired to conceal the fact that the army were longing for a war with the Mahratta States."*

Had the British taken the Maratha princes into their confidence and consulted them as to the best measures that should be adopted for crushing the Pindaris, there would have been no Maratha war at all. The above-quoted author is also of the same opinion. He writes :

"Had the whole scope of our policy been fully understood at the Mahratta courts, had they known that we were really acting in good faith towards them and that our steady friendship could be secured by honestly co-operating with us for the suppression of the Pindaree hordes, whilst no real danger threatened their independence but that which they might bring upon themselves, by their own rashness, they would not have suffered their fears to hurry them into aggression. But they only knew that we were putting our armies in motion from all points and that in every cantonment of India the talk was about the probabilities of another war with the Mahrattas."†

Kaye was after all an Englishman and so he takes a lenient view of the conduct of his co-religionists and compatriots. But, as said above, the Britishers were not acting in good faith towards the princes of India. Thus Jaipur was sacrificed to the greed of adventurers of the type of Amir Khan.

But Earl Moira, desirous of going to war with the Marathas, induced the Rajput princes by means of his emissaries to send embassies to him asking him to take them under the protection of the East India Company's Government. These requests of the Rajput princes served him as a pretext to intimate to Sindhia that the solemn treaty which the British Government of India had conluded with him a decade ago was to be abrogated and a new one to be substituted in its stead. For our own part, we believe that Tod, the historian of the Rajputs, was the principal emissary of the Marquess of Hastings in stirring up the princes of Rajputana and inducing them to seek the protection of the Company.

It was perhaps the part of an emissary which Tod played so successfully in Rajputana, which led Hasting to appoint him to the important charge of five states, thus passing over the claims of others who were senior to him in age and service.

Tod succeeded in coaxing the Rajputs to seek the protection of the East India Company. It was perhaps with this object in view that he flattered their national vanity and was induced to write that history of their race, which, possessing great and undoubted merits, is disfigured by statements which are greatly exaggerated and are also devoid of truth. Sir Henry Lawrence, who was accredited to Rajputana as the Governor-General's agent in Lord Dalhousie's time, wrote in a letter to Sir John Kaye, dated Mount Abu, June 19th, 1854:

"You are right in thinkining that the Rajputs are a dissatisfied, opium-eating race. Tod's picture, however it may have applied to the past, was a caricature on the present. There is little, if any, truth or honesty in them and not much more manliness. Every principality is more or less in trouble."§

* *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 193, f. n.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 189.

§ Life of Sir H. Lawrence by Sir Herbert Edwardes and H. Merivale, Vol. II, p. 256.

Lord Hastings brought the Rajput princes into the web of the Company's subsidiary alliance. It will be remembered that the Jaipur prince had greatly helped the Government of India in the time of the Marquess Wellesley in their war with the Marathas. After the departure of the Marquess Wellesley, Sir George Barlow adopted a line of policy which Sir Charles Metcalfe condemned in very strong terms.

Why the Governor-General entered into alliance with the Rajputs has been narrated by him as follows :

"The former treaty with Sindhia, which I had declared annulled on the proof of his hostile practices, contained an article, equally discreditable and embarrasing. We were bound by it to have no correspondence with the Rajput States, and were thus debarred from granting to them that protection which they offered to repay by co-operating for the suppression of the Pindaries. Emancipated from so injurious a shackle, I received all these states as feudatory to the British Government. Though each possessed considerable force, their reciprocal estrangements (proceeding chiefly from punctilious, and often hereditary quarrels between the reigning princes) prevented their ever forming any union."*

How Lord Hastings obliged Sindhia to accept the treaty forced on him has been narrated by that nobleman as follows :

"Certainly, had Sindhia, by much the most powerful of the native sovereigns, been in the field at the head of his assembled veteran troops, with the fine aud well-manned artillery which he possessed, time, as well as encouragement, would have been afforded to the other confederated powers for resorting to arms in so many quarters as must have made our movements cautious, consequently protracted, under heavy expense. The incurrence of such circumstances was at all events to be risked by us : since, I repeat, it was not a matter of option, whether the extinction of an evil so intolerable as the ravages of the Pindaries should be undertaken. It has been said, however, that a confident expectation was entertained of achieving the main purpose, while every hostile speculation of the native sovereigns would be repressed by our sudden pre-occupation of particular positions : and this calculation applied in a more special degree to Sindhia. Residing at Gwalior, he was in the heart of the richest part of his dominions ; but independently of the objection that those provinces were separated from our territory by the Jumna, there was a military defect in the situation, to which it must be supposed the Maharaja had never adverted, About twenty miles south of Gwalior, a ridge of very abrupt hills, covered with tangled wood peculiar to India, extends from the little Sind to the Chumbal, which rivers form the flank boundaries of the Gwalior district and its dependencies. There are but two routes by which carriages, and perhaps cavalry, can pass that chain ; one along the little Sind, and another not far from the Chumbal. By my seizing with the centre division a position which would bar any movement along the little Sind and placing Major-General Donkin's division at the back of the other pass, Sindhia was reduced to the dilemma of subscribing the treaty which I offered to him or of crossing the hills through by-paths, attended by the few followers who might be able to accompany him, sacrificing his train of artillery (above one hundred brass guns) with all its appendages. and abandoning at once to us his most valuable possessions. The terms imposed upon him were essentially unqualified submission, though so coloured as to avoid making him feel public humiliation."†

The Pindaris were divided into different *darras* or *labbars,* that is, companies,

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* Lord Hastings' Summary, p. 100. General Appendix to Report from Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company.

† *Ibid., p. 97.*

and as long as they acted in concert, they were almost invincible. But dissensions broke out among them, and so it was not very difficult to destroy them. It is not necessary to describe in detail all the actions that were fought against them. The several works on British Indian History, written by Mill and Wilson, Thornton, Macfarlane, Beveridge, Nolan, Malcolm and above all, Prinsep's Transactions have given detailed information regarding the manner in which the Pindari hordes were dealt with by the troops commanded by British officers. Those Pindari leaders who submitted and betrayed their whilom comrades were provided with lands calculated to produce several thousand rupees a year. But Chitu alone held out and did not surrender himself to the British. His fate was miserable, for he met with a tragic end, being devoured by a tiger.

Although the latter-day Pindaris were mostly bandits and robbers, yet they were not altogether devoid of humane feelings and, therefore, they were able to gather many followers. Writes H. H. Wilson :*

"That so many should still have adhered to their leaders, amidst all the hardships and dangers which they underwent, is a singular proof of that fidelity to their leaders which characterises the natives of India; as nothing could have been more easy than for a Pindary to have deserted his captain, and become identified with the peasantry. The tenacity with which some of their principal leaders clung to the life of a wanderer and a plunderer, preferring privation, peril and death, to the ease and security of tranquil social existence, exhibited also that impatience of control, that love of independence which is the general attribute of half-civilised and martial people. It has been remarked as extraordinary, that in many parts of the country, and particularly in Harawati, the villagers were disinclined to give any information that might lead to the discovery and destruction of a Pindary band; but the inhabitants of those countries had never suffered any greater injury from the Pindaries than from the other component members of the Marhatta army, they considered rapine inherent in the system, had often taken part in it themselves, looked with sympathy and admiration upon the hardships and hazards which their countrymen and fellow-plunderers underwent. The state of society in Central India was similar to that of Europe in the early part of the middle ages, when robbers and outlaws, free companions and banditti, were objects of less terror than the more powerful and equally rapacious baron, the more necessitous and equally unscrupulous monarch."

* Vol. III, p. 211.

CHAPTER LII.

THE WAR WITH THE JAT PRINCES.

Lord Hastings succeeded admirably by his diplomacy to detach Sindhia from the other Maratha confederates and prevented him from joining them in the war which was going to be undertaken against them. He also made the Rajputs subserve his purpose. But he was not easy in his mind regarding the Jat princes of the Doab, of whom the most notable was that of Bharatpur. Lake had signally failed in his two attempts to capture that place. Hastings did not consider it expedient to court another disaster by declaring war against Bharatpur. But it was deemed politic by him to fight two petty princes of that race in the Doab, *viz.*, the Rajas of Hathras and Mursan. Prinsep mentions why it was necessary for the Governor-General to reduce them.

"Hutras was reckoned one of the strongest forts in India. Dya-Ram was a Jat, and derived no small accession of confidence and estimation, from being a relation of the Bhurtpoor Raja, with whom he claimed equality of rank. The fort was kept in the closest state of repair.... At the close of 1816, it was resolved to reduce both Daya-Ram and Bhugwant (Raja of Moorsan) to the level of subjects, and to employ an overwhelming force for the purpose, as well to bear down all opposition, as to give *eclat* to the measure..... On the 11th of February (1817), the place (Hutras) was invested on all sides. Dya-Ram was then summoned to surrender a gate of his fort and allow of its being dismantled."*

In his *Private Journal,* dated January 10th, 1816,† the Marquess of Hastings wrote that Dya-Ram "refused to let any of the Company's servants, civil or military, go into the fort of Hathrass." For this great offence he was to be punished. It was said that the fort of Hathras was built after the model of that of Bharatpur and hence the Governor-General was desirous that the British officers should be allowed to inspect it and be thus enabled to successfully besiege and reduce the latter fortress, before which they had been defeated and had thus lost their military prestige.

Of course, the spirited Jat prince was not going to tamely submit and very properly refused to surrender the fort and comply with the demand of the British lord, whose aggression on his territory was quite unprovoked. Raja Daya-Ram's resources were not equal to those of the Company and so resistance for him for any length of time was not to be expected. But he fought very bravely. Writes H. H. Wilson:

"Batteries were opened against the town and fort, and a vigorous bombardment was kept up upon the latter. A practical breach was effected in the walls of the town by the 23rd. On the 2nd of March, a shell made its way into the powder magazine, and was followed by a tremendous explosion, which completed the work of desolation within the ramparts. The besieged still maintainted a show of resistance, and returned the fire of the batteries; but Daya-Ram, now convinced of the futility of resistance,...effected

* Vol. I, p. 418.

† Panini Office reprint, p. 273.

his escape at midnight with a small body of retainers. They were encountered by a party of the dragoons, but made good their retreat, after inflicting more loss than they suffered, being armed with back and breast-plates and gauntlets of steel."*

The capture of Hathras dispirited the Raja of Mursan, who surrendered his fort without any resistance.

"Thus," writes Prinsep, "was this important object gained, without any sacrifice of lives; while the impression of the utter futility of resistance spread far and wide through Hindustan, and even through the remote Dukhun, where it materially influenced the subsequent conduct of the Maratha chiefs and killedars."†

* (Mill & Wilson, VIII, pp. 93-94).

† (Vol. I. pp. 419-420).

CHAPTER LIII

THE WAR WITH THE MARATHA PRINCES

Of the four Maratha Princes, *viz.*, the Sindhia, the Peshwa, the Bhonsla of Nagpur, and the Holkar, the manner in which the Sindhia had been entrapped by Lord Hastings has been already mentioned before. The other three were being so badly treated by the British, that they were provoked to go to war with them. How Lord Hastings made preparations for the war has been thus described in "Memoirs of Colonel Skinner:"

"So early as the end of 1816, a number of detachments were thrown out from various points with so much skill as to check the lubburs of that season with considerable success, and great loss on the part of the Pindarees. But arrangements on a far more extensive scale were in progress; and while negotiations were opened with those princes or chieftains who could be brought to reason, the preparations for coercing the refractory were silently but industriously carried on. During the summer and autumn of 1817, the various bodies of troops assembled at their posts. The grand army, under command of Lord Hastings in person, consisting of about 34,000 regular troops, was formed in three divisions and a reserve, and occupied positions at Agra, Secundra, near Kalpee, on the Jumna, and Kalinger in Bundelcund; the reserve being stationed at Rewaree, south-west of Dehlee.

"The army of the Dekkan, under command of Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Hislop, was formed in five divisions and a reserve; and amounted to 57,000 regulars, which were disposed so as to cross the Nerbudda simultaneously at Hindia and Hoshingabad, to occupy positions in Berar and in Candeish and act as circumstances should indicate; while a division from Guzerat was to enter Malwah by Dohud. To this large force of regular troops—the largest by far that ever took the field from British India—was added 23,000 of irregular horse, of which 13,000 were attached to the army of the Dekkan, and 10,000 to that of Bengal.

"This vast scheme, rendered complete by some subsidiary details, was calculated to embrace the whole disaffected region; and advancing inwards, like one of Timour's or Chengiz-Khan's gigantic hunts, to converge to any central point that should prove the fittest for final action, and thus gather together and crush, without hope of escape, every refractory or treacherous power within its circuit. Never, assuredly, was any plan of military operations better concerted to effect its purpose and never was any combination of diplomatic and military tactics more completely crowned with success. The end of that year, and the space of a single month, saw the Peishwah and the Bhonslah, with the representatives of Holkar, baffled alike in their intrigues and their efforts at open resistance. The battle of Kirkee,...... sent the first a hunted fugitive, to a quiet asylum. The battles of Seetabuldee and Nagpore, in like manner, proved the death-blows to the Bhonslah chief,... The subjection of the once proud family of Holcar cost even less time and trouble."*

In the following chapters will be mentioned the manner in which war was brought about with those Maratha princes.

Vol. II. pp. 124 and 1?0.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE LAST OF THE PESHWAS

The treatment which the last Peshwa received at the hands of the English was only a shade less cruel and tyrannical than that which their prototypes, the Spanish, are charged with in their dealings with the monarchs of Peru and Mexico. But for the help which the last Peshwa Baji Rao rendered to the English, the consolidation of their power over the peninsula of India would have been impossible. It is true, he played into their hands. He was false to himself and false to the people over whom he ruled, but it must be admitted that he was always true to the British. Gratitude forms a marked trait in the character of Asiatics in general and of the Hindus in particular. Baji Rao was grateful to the English for regaining his throne at Puna. He was never tired of giving expression to the deep debt of gratitude he owed to the British for his position.

In the early years of the nineteenth century Lord Valentia, a well-known traveller, came out to India and paid a visit to Puna. He was no mean judge of men. He had three interviews with the Peshwa and on page 130, Vol. II, of his Travels, he has recorded the impression produced on his mind by Baji Rao. Lord Valentia was satisfied that the Peshwa highly valued the English alliance and was sincerely delighted when he heard the news that Holkar's fort of Chandor in Nasik had fallen into the hands of the English army.

Sir James Mackintosh Chief Justice of Bombay, was undoubtedly one of the most learned men of his age. He had travelled widely and seen many countries and nations. Certainly he can be credited with being a very good judge of human character. He was so favourably impressed with the personality of Baji Rao, that he considered that Brahmin ruler of the Deccan far superior to George III and Napoleon, to whom he had been presented.

The British resident at the Court of the Peshwa was Colonel Barry Close. He had every opportunity to know the Peshwa very intimately and to become acquainted with his views and sentiments. That Resident had no doubt that the Peshwa was sincere in his gratitude to the English. He had never seen the Peshwa so evidently pleased or heard him more unequivocally declare his sentiments.

It was his interest to be grateful to the British for his restoration to power. Mrs. Maria Graham, afterwards better known as Lady Caldecott, visited Puna in 1809 and she described the Peshwa as a prisoner in the hands of the English. She was quite right in looking upon his situation as that of a prisoner.

Prisoner though he was, he was grateful to the English for his existence. While he expressed his sentiments of gratitude to the English, what were the feelings of the latter towards him? They behaved towards him in a manner which goaded him to make the last effort, which is not unusual for a prisoner to make, to get out of his

prison house. The British had no regard for him and they taxed and strained his patience to the utmost.

To fully understand the nature of the treatment which Baji Rao received at the hands of the English, we have to turn our attention to that period of Indian history when the Duke of Wellington was commanding the combined forces of the allies in the Deccan. That Duke entertained no high opinion of any Indian,--prince or peasant. This is not to be wondered at. A jaundiced man sees everything yellow. Because he himself did not act upon the ten commandments of the religion which he professed, he naturally thought others were also as bad as he himself.* With his perverse moral nature, it was not unnatural for him to impute motives to others, not to see anything good in their conduct and always seem to see instances of 'bad faith' in their doings, forgetting all the while that t was his co-religionists and compatriots in India who were guilty of bad faith towards the princes and people of the country.

Sir Arthur Wellesley advised his co-religionists to practise treachery in their dealings with their ally, the Peshwa. To raise traitors in the camp of the Peshwa was the policy that he urged his countrymen to adopt. In his despatches, he wrote :

"I certainly had a bad opinion of the Peishwa ; he has no public feeling, and his private disposition is terrible. I have no positive proof that he has been treacherous, but I have a strong suspicion of it.

"It may be asked, will you leave a fellow of that kind in possession of that government ? I answer, I have no remedy ; I cannot take it for the British Government, without a breach of faith and another war. I do not know whether I should mend the matter in respect to treachery by giving him either of his brothers as a dewan ; but I do know, that if I was to give the government over to Amrut Rao, I should establish there a most able fellow who, if he should prove treacherous, would be a worse thorn in the side of the British Government than the creature who is Peshawa at present can ever be."†

Again, in his letter to Lieut. Frissell, dated 17th February 1804, he wrote many things which he considered to be acts of treachery on the part of the Peshwa against the British.

Yes, the ministers of the Peshwa were to be bribed in order to betray their master. This was a counsel of perfection which was out-machiavelling Machiavelli himself. But as long as Sir Barry Close was the Resident at Puna, he did not act on the Wellesleyan policy. There is no evidence at least from the published records to say that that resident carried into execution Sir Arthur Wellesley's suggestion. Close's opinion of the Peshwa has already been given above.

But with the appointment of Mountstuart Elphinstone as Resident at Puna, the advice of Sir Arthur Wellesley began to be carried out to the very letter. Elphinstone was a native of Scotland and the youngest son of a Scotch Baron. He had not received much of literary education in his native country when he was sent out at

* Mr. Pearson, in his "National Life and Character," says—"Nelson, who intrigued with his friend's wife ; Wellington, who was certainly not irreproachable and Warren Hastings, who purchased a divorced wife from a needy foreigner, would scarcely be permitted now to save the Empire." (Page 213).

† (Vol. III. p. 19.)

the early age of sixteen as a writer on the East India Company's establishment in Bengal. This appointment was secured to him through the interest of his uncle, who was at that time Chairman of the East India Company. In those days Scotchmen were given many lucrative posts in India, because Mr. Dundas, who was at the head of Indian affairs in Great Britain, was himself a native of Scotland and so naturally preferred his kith and kin to outsiders. Elphinstone's mother prevailed on Dundas to use his influence with Lord Mornington in favour of her son. Lord Mornington was at that time Governor-General of India. So on the recommendation of Dundas, he took great interest in Elphinstone and appointed him to the diplomatic service as one of the Assistants to the Resident at Puna. When he was appointed diplomatic Assistant at Puna, the Peshwa had not parted with his independence, for he had not as yet agreed to Mornington's scheme of subsidiary alliance. The British Government at that time were making every attempt to ensnare the Peshwa in that scheme, and from Elphinstone's Journals, extracts from which have been given by his biographer Sir T. E. Colebrooke, it is evident how the Political Resident and his assistants at Puna worked hard to make the Peshwa believe that his safety consisted in placing the yoke of the subsidiary alliance on his neck. The following extract from Elphinstone's Journal needs no word of comment:

"Major Hemming said the Maharattas were too wise to be tempted to admit a subsidiary force of ours. He mentioned that the Peishwa was going to raise several battalions, to be commanded by Brahmins. It appears to me that the Peishwa must feel his subjection to Sindia, that he must be convinced that Sindia's strength arises from his disciplined troops, that as soon as he is convinced that none but Europeans can form corps capable of opposing other Europeans, he will see the advantage of having Englishmen to oppose Sindia's Frenchmen. Sindia is not at present in a condition to resist any attempt of ours to establish troops at Poona. I hope he may not be so weak as to free the Peishwa from apprehension."*

The Peshwa became a prisoner of the English by signing the Treaty of Bassein and this Treaty was the cause of the Second Maratha War. Throughout the whole of this war, Elphinstone served as an assistant on the staff of Sir Arthur Wellesley. It was in this capacity that he learned from the Iron Duke that crooked policy which passes under the name of diplomacy and statecraft in Indian history.

After the war with the Marathas was over, Elphinstone was appointed Resident at Nagpur, and there he served upwards of four years. The objects for which the East India Company used to appoint Residents at the Courts of Indian princes were to foment intrigues and domestic dissensions and thus to pave the way for the ultimate absorption of those principalities.

The Company's government expected Elphinstone to discharge these duties with enthusiasm and zeal, that is to say, he was to carry on intrigues and play the part of a spy, for his patron, Sir Arthur Wellesley, wrote to him, when he was appointed Political Resident at Nagpur to do so.

The course of intrigue which Elphinstone followed in Nagpur, made him a perfect

* Vol. I, p. 34.

master of statecraft and his moral nature debased and degraded. This he himself admitted, for he wrote in one of his Journals:

"Since I came to Nagpur I have been dreadfully coarse and unfeeling. This I attribute in some measure to business, which forces and leads me to despise refined thought"

This training in intrigues, in tempting others with corruption and bribery in order to betray their masters, made Elphinstone a renowned diplomatist, a perfect hypocrite, and a successful follower of Machiavelli. On this depended his promotion and his subsequent employment to all offices of diplomacy.

He served in Nagpur for four years. In 1809 he was sent to Afghanistan. But his diplomatic mission to Afghanistan during the regime of Minto was an utter faliure, for he did not succeed in duping the wideawake Afghan monarch.*

Like all other Britishers, he was ambitious to make a name for himself and also to benefit his co-religionists and compatriots serving in India. While he was in Afghanistan, he wrote to the Governor-General to take Sindh from the Amirs of that country.†

* "The Mission was now virtually closed, though the name was kept up for some months to enable the envoy and his coadjutors to prepare their report on the countries they had visited. He returned depressed at the failure of the sanguine hopes with which he had started some six months before; and he never, in his letters or journals, reverted to this period of his carreer without some expression of dissatisfaction." Colebrooke's *Life of Mountstuart Elpfiinstone*, Vol. I, p. 218.

† "The Dooranncc Government, pressed by their urgent wants, made overtures to the Indian Government, which might have proved tempting under other circumstances, to raise money on the security of the revenues of Sind. The first proposal amounted to no more than ordinary methods of Eastern governments, of granting assignments of the revenues of provinces, either for Military Service, or to Bankers for advances of money. The proposal was that the Indian Government should rent Sind, and did not necessarily convey a cession of sovereign rights, though it involved complete independence of administration.

"The proposal was summarily rejected. Somewhat later the subject was renewed and a proposal was made for a complete cession of the right to the territory, in consideration of an annual payment. In the meantime, intelligence reached Peshawar that our relations with the rulers of Sind were embroiled, and that the envoy sent to Hyderabad had left the country, and that a friendly reception had been given to an agent representing Persian and the dreaded French influence."

"Mr. Elphinstone thought it his duty to submit the King's proposal to the Government of Calcutta, alluding, at the same time, to the departure of the British envoy from Hyderabad, and assuming, therefore, that the proposal might fall in with the views of the Government. This proposal was accompanied by another suggestion equally important, and which may be regarded as Mr. Elphinstone's own. A moderate subsidy would, he thought, give the King such a preponderance over his rivals as to render his throne for the time stable, and bind him to our interests against any invasion from the west; and this, if combined with the cession of Sind, would give some vigour to our ally, without diminishing our own resources, and the whole proposal would have the effect of shutting up the southern route to India, while it afforded the means of defence on the northern.

"......This bold proposal, thus submitted to the Government, though guarded with every consideration of prudence and justice, brought on the young envoy a severe reproof. The plan of subsidising the Cabul monarchy appeared rash and an uncertain advantage.

"......Whatever might be the King's claim on Sind, the territory was virtually independent, and he could transfer only a nominal sovereignty. The Government would be disinclined under any circumstances to enter on a project of such extent. 'But in fact', so the despatch proceeded, 'considerations intimately connected with those fundamental principles of political discretion, as

Minto was at that time the Governor-General. He turned a deaf ear to Elphinstone's proposal, since it was not agreeable to him. But now as Resident at Puna, he had to serve a different master. The Marquess of Hastings was an unscrupulous and ambitious man. It was his policy to bring as much of India under the sway of his countrymen as he possibly could, by fraud and force. And in Elphinstone he found an admirable tool to carry out his purpose.*

well as of political morality, by which alone the true honour and prosperity of the British Empire in the East can be permanently maintained, would under any circumstances, oppose the adoption of that project; while its practicability, and success are too doubtful to warrant the attempt even if it were unopposed by the dictates of prudent policy and the obligations of political justice," *Ibid.*, pages 218 to 221.

Elphinstone was so ambitious that, because there was no scope for his ambition in India after the Third Mahratta War, he did not accept the Governor-Generalship of India when offered to him. In his diary, dated September 1, 1834, he wrote:

"But the first question is, would the situation suit me if there were no obstacle to my taking it? I must premise that, as there is no particular crisis in India, and I have no particular abilities, I may assume that it is of no consequence to the public whether I go or another. I have, therefore, only personal considerations to attend to. *Now the chance of great events occurring is not considerable,* nor is it certain if they did occur, that I should conduct them with distinction......In foreign politics I should probably be most in my element. I suppose, coming after an unpopular man......I should go on smoothly with the service but *I could not expect to be so popular as at Bombay......and where I brought along with me an addition of territory, increase to allowances,......The chance, therefore, is on the whole that I should not augment my reputation.* Titles, even if I gained them, would be of no value unless gained by actions, the chance of which has been discussed. My time out there would pass in comparative misery......

"I ought to remember, however, that in these days glory is out of fashion, and if I were to resist a Russian, it would be less thought of than if I had proposed a reduction in some trifling tax at home; while, with respect to faults, I shall find the popular leaders much more captious and quick-sighted than the old members of Parliament, and the Ministers much less decided in defending measures of which they had not previously expressed disapprobation."

From the above, there can be no doubt in the mind of any reasonable man of the ambitious nature of Elphinstone.

* How unscrupulous Elphinstone himself was will be evident from the following extracts from one of his papers, probably written in 1811 and 1812.

"To resume our former policy and seize every opportunity of returning to the situation from which we voluntarily receded in 1805, and to proceed in the same spirit till we had established an efficient control over every state on this side of the Indus, I see no difficulty in effecting this except what arises from our treaties, which I would not take a step, directly or indirectly, to infringe: but I think that it requires pains and sacrifices on our part to preserve those treaties which are so hurtful to our interest,'and that by letting things take their natural course, we should soon get rid of them. Holkar's Government has expired, and its treaties along with it. Nothing prevents our making a subsidiary treaty with the Raja of Berar. Sindia would soon fall either into our arms or those of Meer Khan: and his surrender of his claims on the Rajputs might be made the condition of his obtaining peace in the one case, or our alliance in the other......Ranjeet Singh's sincere friendship would be of the greatest value to us; but if he quarrelled with us within a year or two, we shall be able to overturn his Government......As for the Talpoorees, I would greatly prefer a just war with them to a treaty,"

Colebrooke, the biographer of Elphinstone, says, "there is no reason to suppose that it ever formed the base of a State paper." No, on the contrary, the biographer should have written

Elphinstone served under Wellington in the Second Maratha War. While serving in this capacity, intimacy sprang up between him and the future Duke. After the conclusion of that war, he was posted as Resident at Nagpur. In a letter to him dated 29th January, 1804, the future Duke gave expression to his views regarding the Marathas, which should be quoted here. He wrote to Elphinstone:

"The Mahrattas are but little in the habit of adhering to truth......" Again, "Under these circumstances of irregularity and *want of principle and good faith,* and as it appears impossible to raise the views of those with whom we are obliged to act above those of a Pindary or a rapacious amildar, I have only to recommend to you to continue your efforts to oblige the Rajah to withdraw the few troops who remain in Berar; . . ."

The words put in italics in the above extract are no doubt curious reading. What principle and good faith were the British themselves exhibiting in their dealings with their non-Christian antagonists?

The Duke himself lacked in principle and good faith for the manner in which he poisoned the mind of every one in authority against the Peshwa. In his letter to Major Shawe, dated the 26th January, 1804, the Duke wrote:

"I certainly have a bad opinion of the Peishwa; he has no public feeling, and his private disposition is terrible. I have no positive proof that he has been treacherous, but I have a strong suspicion of it; . . ."

Again, he wrote to Major Malcolm on the 27th January, 1804:

"I have written fully to the Governor-General and to Shawe about the Peishwa; . . . I have also laid open the Peishwa's character, rather more than it has been lately."

Yet with that consummate hypocrisy and art of dissimulation of which he was a perfect master, he wrote on the 30th January, 1904, to Lieut., Frissell, who was acting as Resident at Puna:

"The Peishwa should be made to understand, that the British Government feel for the honour, the security, and the prosperity of his Government in the same manner as they do for that of the Company; that they are too strong to render it necessary *that they should have recourse to intrigues to overturn his Government, if they should wish it, which is by no means likely. . . .*"

The words in italics are a curious commentary on the Duke's advocating the bribing of the Peshwa's ministers to betrary their master and the measures adopted by Elphinstone, which will be presently narrated, to encompass the ruin of the Peshwa.

The future Duke failed in his attempt to poison the mind of Sir Barry Close, who was Resident at Puna, against the Peshwa; he did not succeed in imparting to the Resident that hatred which he cherished in his bosom against the Peshwa. For seven years, Sir Barry Close was Resident at Puna. During that long time, he had good opportunities to judge the character of the Peshwa. The opinion he formed of Baji Rao, has already been given above. Sir Barry Close was not influenced by the perverse views of the future Duke. He refused to borrow other's eyes or spectacles to see the conduct of the Peshwa or to read in his actions some sinister

that "there is every reason to suppose that that paper guided the policy of Marquess Hastings and o Elphinstone in their dealings with the princes of India."

motives. What sort of man Sir Barry Close was will be gathered from the description of Elphinstone himself. According to him,

"A strong and hardy frame, a clear head, and vigorous understanding, fixed principles, unshaken courage, contempt for pomp and pleasure, entire devotion to the public service, joined to the utmost modesty and simplicity, formed the character of Sir Barry Close—a character such as one would rather think imagined in ancient Rome than met with in our own age and nation."*

Instead of dealing direct with the Peshwa Sir Barry Close appointed a Parsi by name Kharshedji Jamshedji Modi as his agent to transact business with the Peshwa and his Court. This appointment gave satisfaction to all the parties concerned in the matter, since the Parsi agent was a man of judgment and great address. But when Elphinstone came as Resident to Puna in 1811, he upset Close's arrangement, which had so far acted very smoothly without producing any friction between the Peshwa and the British. It does not appear from the records that the interests of the latter had suffered in any way by the manner in which Kharshedji transacted the business of the British Residency. But the first act of Elphinstone when he came to Puna was the removal of this man from the post which he had held with great credit to himself and to the benefit of all parties concerned.†

Elphinstone considered himself so well-versed in Maratha statecraft that in his opinion it was not necessay for him to employ the Parsi any longer as intermediary between himself and the Peshwa for the transaction of state business. Moreover, it was alleged that Kharshedji had been won over to the Peshwa's interests, of which, of course, there is no evidence. In the step which Elphinstone took he displayed considerable want of tact. Kharshedji had been in power for a number of years and had enjoyed the confidence of Colonel Sir Barry Close. But with the arrival of Elphinstone, he found himself deprived of his power, shorn of authority, *and, as it appeared to him, disgraced in the eyes of the public.* The change was also not welccme to the Peshwa. As diplcmatists and political officers the British are very troublesome to deal with. His removal from authority was nothing short of humiliation to Kharshedji and was not calculated to inspire the Peshwa with confidence in Elphinstone. Since power is sweet to everyone, it is not impossible that, to avenge himself on Elphinstone, Kharshedji made the Peshwa acquainted with Elphinstone's

* Colebrooke's Elphinstone, Vol. I, p. 270.

† In Colebrook's Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone there is no mention of Mr. Kharshedji Modi at all. It must be admitted that Colebrooke has suppressed many important facts and has painted his hero as an immaculate saint rather than as a worldly-wise man and diplomatist with little sense of high moral principles.

From one of the extracts from Elphinstone's diary with which Colebrooke has furnished us it would seem that Elphinstone used to exhibit his temper or rather adopt a bullying tone while talking to the Peshwa and his Minister. Under date October 20, 1812, Elphinstone writes in his diary:

"I have been thinking of another resolution which I must mention more openly from the details which it involves; this is to correct my temper, particularly on occasions of business . . . I must *be particularly cautious with the Peishwa and his Minister, whom it is my business to conciliate,* though I have neither respect nor esteem for either of them." (I. 271).

political views and scheming designs. The Peshwa was alarmed and naturally could not look upon the new British political as his friend and well-wisher. He commenced to cherish the most bitter hatred against Elphinstone.

Kharshedji seemed to Elpinstone to be a thorn in his side, and hence his destruction or removal from the Peshwa's dominion in the Deccan was highly desirable. Elphinstone, on the mere suspicion of his advising the Peshwa against the British, required him to leave the Deccan and retire to Guzerat. But as Kharshedji was about to leave Puna, he died of poison. According to the version of the British, either he took the poison himself in order to commit suicide, or else he was poisoned at the Peshwa's suggestion. None of these theories advanced by the British satisfactorily account for Kharshedji's death. They based the theory of his committing suicide on the allegation that his corrupt practices would become public as soon as he left Puna. Now, this theory will hardly hold water when we remember the fact that he was already in the bad books of Elphinstone and his going to Guzerat would place him beyond the reach of Elphinstone's power to punish him.

The alternative theory that he was poisoned at the Peshwa's suggestion, is equally absurd. It is alleged that the Peshwa did so because Kharshedji knew too many of his secrets. Now, what was the reason which prompted Elphinstone to remove Kharshedji from the Deccan? It was because it was alleged that he had been won over to the Peshwa's interest and because it was suspected that he had been advising the Peshwa against the British "by constantly enlarging on the great gains which the British Government had received from the treaty of Bassein." If these allegations and suspicions have any leg to stand upon, does it stand to reason that the Peshwa should have poisoned his well-wisher and friend? The esteem in which he was held by the Peshwa is evident from his having given land to him in Guzerat, which Kharshedji's descendants enjoy to this day. It being admitted by the English that Kharshedji was a great favourite with the Peshwa, it passes one's understanding why the Peshwa should have poisoned him.

The above considerations lead to one and only one reasonable conclusion, *viz.*, that if Kharshedji died of poison, he did not take it himself to commit suicide, nor could it have been given to him at the Peshwa's suggestion, but in all probability it was administered to him by some one of the hired emissaries of Elphinstone. There is nothing improbable or impossible in it. The attitude of Elphinstone towards Kharshedji is in itself sufficient to cast the suspicion on him. Kharshedji knew a great many of Elphinstone's secrets; he knew the plot that was being hatched in the Residency against the Peshwa, hence it was desirable to remove him by poison, just as the Borgias used to do in bye-gone days.

But the measure which Elphinistone adopted in ordering Kharshedji to leave Puna was not the only one which destroyed good understanding between him and the Peshwa. Elphinstone did every thing in his power to try the patience of the Peshwa and alienate his friendship. The Peshwa repeatedly asked the Resident to settle his claims on the Nizam and on the Gaekwar. Elphinstone did not display his wonted energy in settlino the matter.

It is necessary here to refer in more detail to the nature of the claims which the Peshwa advanced on the Gaekwar's government.

It was in 1751 that Dummaji Gaekwar was made a prisoner by the Peshwa Balaji Rao in the Deccan and was not released till he had executed a bond by which he agreed to equally partition both the territory already acquired, and all future conquests in Guzerat. Dummaji also bound himself to maintain ten thousand horse to assist the Peshwa when required, and to pay an annual tribute of five lacs and twenty-five thousand rupees, and to contribute a certain sum for the support of the Satara Raja's establishment. Part of this tribute Dummaji and his descendants never paid to the Peshwa; the arrears thus amounted to about a crore of rupees. The Peshwa urged the Resident to take steps to settle these pecuniary claims of his on the Gaekwar. There was an agent of the Gaekwar at Puna by the name of Bapu Myral, who was found unfit to settle these matters. Hence the Peshwa desired that some one else should be sent from Baroda who was competent to deal with those questions. The Baroda government nominated Gangadhar Shastri as Gaekwar's agent. The nomination of this man was highly offensive to the Peshwa and he strongly objected to it. But Elphinstone totally ignored the Peshwa's protests and forced, as it were, Gangadhar Shastri on him. Elphinstone refused to attach any weight to the Peshwa's objection, because when Gangadhar Shastri's name was proposed to the Peshwa in 1811, the latter did not raise any objection!

It is necessary to narrate the rise of Gangadhar Shastri. He was a Brahman of very humble parentage. In his early life, he was a servant in the Phadke family of Puna and it was said that he had been once insolent to the Peshwa. Vain and shrewd as he was, he knew how to get on in the world. At the time of which we are writing, the English were by fraud and intrigue trying to consolidate their power in the land of the Marathas and depriving the latter of the territories which their genius and valor had secured them. In Gangadhar Shastri the English found a fit instrument to carry on their designs and give effect to their schemes. The author of the *Baroda Gazetteer*, Mr. F. A. H. Elliot, thus writes of this Brahmin:

"His (Gangadhar Shatree's) usefulness was already well-known to the Honorable Company and he rapidly acquired the confidence of a strong party in the Darbar headed by Babaji and afterwards by Fatehshing, till, at last, feared or respected by the British and the courts of Poona and Baroda, the Shastree came to play the most important part in the history of Baroda." (P. 209)

The same author also informs us that Gangadhar Shastri,

"accompanying Major A. Walker to Baroda, entered the government service of the British in 1802. In June 1803, the village of Dendole in the *pargana* of Chorasi in the Surat *atthavisi* was granted him and his heirs in perpetuity. It was worth 5000 rupees per annum......

"On the 12th of January 1805, on his daughter's marriage, the Bombay Government presented him with Rs. 4000. On the 15th of May, 1806, a palanquin was given him with allowance of Rs. 1200 a year for its maintenance (p. 210, f. n.).

The close-fisted English must have derived great material advantages through the instrumentality of this man which led them to confer on him all these honours and favours.*

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* The East India Company's Government was indebted to him for his bringing the Baroda State

Naturally this man was looked upon by the Peshwa and many of the dignitaries and nobles of Baroda as a traitor, ready to sell his countrymen and sacrifice their interests in order to gain the smile of, and curry favour with, the English. The Peshwa strongly objected to his appointment, but, as said before, Elphinstone turned a deaf ear to his protests. Nay, Elphinstone went a step further. Knowing the unpopularity of Gangadhar Shastri at Baroda and the enemies that he had created by his overbearing manner, Elphinstone had ample reasons to fear that the life of his protege would not be safe in the Deccan. Gangadhar Shastri himself was unwilling to move out of Baroda, for somehow or other he had some premonition of the danger that was to befall him. Under the circumstances, he should not have been forced to go to Puna as the Gaekwar's agent. But without the Peshwa's knowledge, Elphinstone gave a formal guarantee for the Shastri's safety from the British Government. This conduct of Elphinstone highly offended the Peshwa, who had also several other well-founded reasons to be dissatisfied with the manner in which he was being treated by the English. He was supposed to be their ally, but he was not treated as such. He was the sovereign of Kathiawad, but the English conducted the war in that province without his sanction, and inflicted fines on Navanagar and Junagad of which he had not been officially apprised, and above all, of the settlement made by Colonel Walker, which was an undoubted infringement of the Peshwa's suzerainty.

Gangadhar Shastri set out from Baroda on the 19th of October 1813, and on his arrival in Puna Baji Rao refused to see him. But knowing that he was in the good books of the English, and he was their protege and under their protection in Puna, he commenced a career of intrigues having for their object the ruin and downfall of the Peshwa.

Mention has already been made above of Kharshedji Modi. He was the confidential servant of Sir Barry Close, but he was deprived of authority by Elphinstone. He was still in Puna when Gangadhar Shastri arrived there. This Brahman upstart, knowing

under the supremacy of that Government. When Govind Rao Gaekwar died in September, 1800, he was succeeded by his son, Anand Rao, who "was a thorough simpleton, and had the misfortune to have left to him as legacy from his father a mutinous rabble of an army. This rabble mainly consisted of Arabs...Raojee Appajee, on Anand Rao's part—who, though a simpleton, had sense enough to feel the galling sway of the Arab Jamadars, opened negotiations with the English,... These negotiations were first carried on secretly, until the time that the Honorable Jonathan Duncan, Governor of Bombay, could convince himself that they were earnest on the part of Anand Rao. Then, although prepared with an expeditionary force to back the Gaekwar against Mulhar Rao (one of his family then in arms) and the mutineer Arabs as well as the British officer deputed to his Court, the Honorable Jonathan Duncan instructed Major Alexander Walker, the officer he had selected for the service, to go and judge of the state of matters at Baroda, before joining the force he was to command at Bombay, the place of rendezvous. In obedience to the orders of the Governor, Major Alexander Walker set out for Baroda, and was accompanied on his way thither by Gangadhar Shastree, "who has exercised *no uncommon* influence over the modelling of the events which led to the establishment of English supremacy in the Baroda Darbar, and the subsequent history of Guzerat and the Deccan." (Pp. 6—8 *History of the Rise, Decline and Present State of the Shastree Family, published in 1868 from Bombay*).

that Kharsedji was not in the good books of Elphinstone, left no stone unturned to poison his mind against that Parsi. We are told that—

"In May (1814), the Shastri requested (Mr. Elphinstone) that one man might be either removed from office or wholly trusted. This was Kharsedji Modi, whom the Shastri suspected of. . . . working with Trimbakji to influence the Peishwa, by keeping him in a state of alarm as to the designs of Fatesing and the British."*

The manner in which Kharsedji was ordered to leave Puna and his subsequent fate have already been narrated. But no sensible man can have any reason to doubt that this Parsi met his death at the hands of some of the numerous emissaries of the Puna Resident, Mountstuart Elphinstone.

The mission with which Gangadhar Shastri was charged, did not consist merely in settling the pecuniary claims of the Peshwa on the Gaekwar, but also to secure the lease of the Ahmedabad farm of his master. It has been said before that half of Gujrat belonged to the Gaekwar and the other half to the Peshwa. The Peshwa's share in Gujrat had been leased to the Gaekwar. The terms of the lease were now approaching their close. The Peshwa was unwilling to grant the lease to the Gaekwar, but the British Government wished that the farm of Ahmedabad should be retained by the Gaekwar. We are told on official authority that—

"The Peishwa very sensibly feared that if he continued to grant long leases of the Ahmedabad farm to the Guicowar, the renewal of them would at length come to be a matter of course and that Ahmedabad would in fact lapse into a mere tributary province. . . . . The retention by the Guicowar of the farm of Ahmedabad was anxiously desired by the Bombay Government, whose boundaries touched it at many points and *it was important to thwart every attempt of Baji Rao to create fresh political ties between the courts of Baroda and Puna.*"†

From the words put in italics in the above extract it will be observed that the British Government had been intriguing against the Peshwa. The Peshwa had every right to farm out his share of Gujrat to whomsoever he liked. But it was just what did not suit the convenience of the Bombay Government of the day, and hence Elphinstone surrounded the Peshwa with spies, and it is not improbable that he employed a large number of intriguers to create troubles in the Peshwa's territorries. Well, he was acting on a Machiavellian policy, for political expediency dictated him to do so. This Gangadhar Shastri was a fit instrument in Elphinstorne's hand to carry out all his intrigues. Elphinstone himself has left a description of the Shastri which shows what sort of man this Brahman upstart was. He describes

"Gangadhar Shastri as a person of great shrewdness and talent who keeps the whole state of Baroda in the highest order, at Poona, lavishes money and marshals suwary in such style as to draw the attention of the whole place. Though a very learned Shastri he affects to be quite an Englishman, talks fast, interrupts and contradicts, and calls the Peshwa and his ministers old fools and 'damned rascals' or rather 'dam rascals'."§

Knowing the sentiments of Gangadhar towards the Peshwa and his ministers, a sense of prudence should have told Elphinstone to remove the Shastri as soon as

* *Baroda Gazetteer*, p. 219.

† *Ibid.*, p. 219.

§ Colebrooke's *Elphinstone*, I, 276.

possible from Puna. But the tragical drama would not have been unfolded had Elphinstone been a little prudent in all his dealings with the Peshwa. Nay, it was the interest of Elphinstone to keep the Shastri in Puna, because the latter was serving as his tool and playing the part of a spy on the Peshwa. The person of an ambassador is held sacred according to canons of the International Law of Nations of the civilized world. But it is also a well-known maxim of International Law that the lives of spies and emissaries should not be spared. Since his arrival in Puna Gangadhar Shastri had done his best to create ill feeling between the Peshwa and the English, and he richly deserved the fate which subsequently befell him. There can be no doubt to any reasonable man that Elphinstone gave the formal guarantee for the Sastri's safety from the British Government, knowing the part which that Brahmin upstart had to play and for which International Law prescribes one penalty only, namely, forfeiture of life. Ambassadors and diplomatists are supposed to possess a great deal of that undefinable thing called tact and to act on Tallyrand's saying that language is given unto us to conceal our thoughts. But this Brahman upstart sadly lacked the one and never acted on the other. The manner in which he indulged in vituperation of the Peshwa and his ministers shows how utterly unfit he was for the mission with which he was charged to Puna.

Gangadhar Shastri being known to be a dangerous man, it was the interest of the Peshwa to either conciliate, or if possible, annihilate him. Months passed, and yet the objects for which he was sent to Puna were not accomplished. The lease of the Ahmedabad farm was not renewed in favour of the Gaekwar but given to Trimbakji Danglia, said to have been a great favourite of the Peshwa. When he found the lease of the much coveted Ahmedabad farm was given to another man and not his master, he thought his stay any longer in Puna was useless and so also thought the Gaekwar and the British Government. Accordingly Gangadhar Shastri was ordered to quit Puna and to return to Baroda.

But, as said before, he was a dangerous man and the Peshwa and all his well-wishers tried to buy him off, if possible. Trimbakji Danglia, reputed to be the greatest favourite of the Peshwa, tried his best to effect reconciliation between his master and Gangadhar. We are told by the author of the *Bombay Gazetteer*, Baroda volume, Mr. F. A. H. Eliot, that

"Trimbakji Danglia, very probably at this time really intended a reconciliation. He is said to have confessed to the Shastri that he had at one time dnring the negotiation intended to murder him."*

Now, if his confession be at all true, then nothing short of lunacy and madness would have prompted him to commit the dastardly deed with which, as we shall presently see, he was charged.

In the eyes of the Peshwa, the Shastri's friendship and good-will appeared so important that he left no stone unturned to secure them. But as he was such an important tool in the hands of the English, they were equally determined that he should not be bought over by the Peshwa. The latter offered the Shastri the post of

* *Loc. cit.*, p. 222 f. n.

his minister, but we are told that "this offer the Shastri rejected at the desire of Elphinstone."

The Peshwa made a proposal that the Shastri's son should be married to his sister-in-law. The Shastri agreed to this proposal and accordingly preparations for its celebration were being made at Nasik, where it was to take place. But almost at the eleventh hour, when the preparations were well advanced, the Shastri, without assigning any cause, broke off the marriage contract. Happily for him the law of breach of promise of marriage of the Christian countries of the West is not applicable to India, otherwise he would have had to pay a very large sum of money in damages. The Shastri also prevented his wife from visiting the Peshwa's palace. Of course, no English writers have given or even tried to give any explanation for these unusual steps, which the Shastri adopted; but there can be no doubt to any reasonable man that, in all probability, he was ordered to do so by the Resident at Puna, that is, Elphinstone. Not cordiality but estrangement of feeling between the Puna and Baroda governments was the object aimed at by the British Government, and this the latter did not even conceal. The scandalous manner in which the Shastri was behaving towards the Peshwa was enough to have enraged any one, but to the latter's credit it must be said that he took all these things very calmly.

Although the Ahmedabad farm was not again leased out to the Gaekwar, it would seem that Gangadhar Shastri tried to settle the pecuniary claims of the Peshwa on his master in a manner which was agreeable to the Brahman chief. The Shastri

"granted that the sum of 39 lakhs with interest on the same, was owing to the Gaekwar, and in lieu of all claims, which were then laid by the Peishwa at one crore of arrears and 40 lakhs of tribute, he proposed to surrender territory worth 7 lakhs. At the same time he apprehended that Fatesing would never part with so large a portion of his territory, and prayed the Resident to assist him in influencing the Baroda Court."*

Had the British Government carried out the prayer of the Shastri, all the differences between the Peshwa and the Gaekwar would have been settled. But it was not their policy to do so. Fate Sing Gaekwar did not like the arrangement, and months passed without his vouchsafing any reply to his agent, *i.e.*, the Shastri at Puna. This arrangement was favourable to the Peshwa. It would seem that the British Government did not take any step to settle it, for, in the words of Colonel Wallace, the Peshwa at this time was "growing daily more and more the object of suspicion" of the English. Naturally, Gangadhar Shastri was alarmed at the position of affairs. To quote again the above-named English author:

"The first shock to Gangadhar Shastree's already insecure position was given by the silence of his government respecting the arrangement which he had taken upon himself to propose to the Peishwa as a solution of existing difficulties, and to which the Peishwa had verbally consented. He saw he had authorised the suspicion that he had neglected his master's interests in forwarding his own. To lose the favour of his own prince and to be found fraternizing with one growing daily more and more the object of suspicion to his still more powerful patrons the English !! The dilemma was awful !"†

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* *Baroda Gazetteer*, p. 221.

† P. 200 of Wallace's *History of the Guicowars.*

Had the British Government raised their little finger at his time, all the difficulties would have been easily smoothed over and the settlement of the Peishwa's claims effected. But, as said before, it was not their policy to do so.

Gangadhar Shastri, too, had he been a wise man, would not have stayed a day longer in Puna, seeing the turn which affairs had taken. He was sent to Puna as the Gaekwar's agent and as such he had full powers to settle the affairs of his master. But his master did not agree to his arrangement. What more service could he have rendered to his master by his stay in the capital of the Peshwas ? At the bidding of the English Resident at Puna, he sacrificed his own interests, for he had to reject the Peshwa's offer of the post of his minister and to break off the intended nuptials of his son with the Peshwa's sister-in-law.

But he still stayed in Puna, for according to Colonel Wallace,

"He hoped to conciliate Baji Rao, and yet to retain the good opinion of his English patrons on whose guarantee for his safety, from long observations of its efficacy in Gujrat, he was disposed to place too entire a confidence."*

To make a long story short, he accompanied the Peshwa to Pandharpur, where he was assassinated on the 14th July, 1815. The assassination has been attributed to the instigation of the Peshwa. It is alleged that the Peshwa's favourite, Trimbakji Danglia, hired assassins to do the job, for he was directed by his master to do so.†

* *Ibid.*, p. 207.

† Fateh Singh Gaekwar was the reigning prince at Baroda when Gangadhar Shastri was assassinated. He invited to Baroda the three sons of the deceased, who were at that time at Puna and settled princely allowances on them by means of a *Sunad*, which, however, did not receive the guarantee of the British Government. Fateh Singh's successor, Sayaji Rao, reduced their allowances, on which they appealed to the Bombay Government, at the head of which was at that time Elphinstone. He "did not ask the reason of the appeal and by whose negligence it was that the guarantee was not extended to the family which had indirectly been the cause of his *release* from the Residencey duties at Poona, and *elevation* to the Bombay Governorship, but summarily decided that, as they could show no guarantee from the British Government, he believed his Government had no right to interfere, except by simple advice or recommendation." (Pp. 41-42 of *History of the Rise, Decline and Present State of the Shastree Family.*)

What idea of gratitude was possessed by Elphinstone !

How the murder of Gangadhar Shastri was beneficial to the British is thus narrated by Prinsep :

"In the issue to which matters were brought by the Shastree's murder, we stood forth in the character of avengers of the death of a Brahmin ambassador, and had the full advantage of the popular voice on our side, even among the Peishwa's own subjects. This favourable impression lasted beyond the immediate occasion, insomuch that two years afterwards, when a rupture occurred with nearly all the Maratha states, the cause of the British nation derived a vast accession of strength in public opinion from recollection of the foul murder of this Brahmin, in which the quarrel had originated, and the indifference manifested upon the subsequent down-fall of the Peishwa's dynasty was owing in a great measure to its being regarded as a judgment on the reigning head of the family for his participation in this crime, polluted as he was already by the yet unexpiated murder of Narayan Rao by his father, Raghunath. (P. 321, Vol. I of Prinsep s *History of the Political and Military Transactions*).

Baji Rao—the last of the Peshwas

Malhar Rao Holkar

It is difficult to connect Baji Rao or his favourite Trimbakji with this cowardly and dastardly act. What motive or motives could have prompted them to commit the murder? Of course, Gangadhar Shastri was a vain, dangerous man and played the spy on the Peshwa, and, by causing Kharsedji Modi to be removed from Puna, severely wounded the feelings of Baji Rao. As a spy he richly deserved the fate which befell him and for which no reasonable man should sympathize with him. But had the Peshwa been bent upon taking his life, he could have done it very easily at Puna and not at Pandharpur, the sanctity of which alone would have prevented a superstitious man like the Peshwa from committing such a foul deed. The author of the *Bombay Gazetteer*, Puna volume, writes that Baji Rao

"claimed great holiness and was most careful to keep all religious rules and ceremonies. Apparently, to lay the ghost of Narayan Rao Peishwa, whom his parents had murdered and who seems to have haunted him, Baji Rao planted several hundred thousand mango trees about Poona, gave largesses to Brahmans and religious establishments, and was particularly generous to Vithoba's temple at Pandharpore."*

In a foot-note to the above the same author writes:—"It was probably Narayan Rao's ghost that so often took him to Pandharpore." Now, when to propitiate one ghost, Baji Rao was taking all these troubles at Pandharpur, it is a psychological puzzle to understand, much less to believe, that at the same place this very superstitious Baji Rao should even think of perpetrating a crime similar to that of his parent. When he was taking all these measures to free his father of his sin, does it stand to reason, that he himself should stain his hands with the same sort of sin?

It may be argued that Gangadhar Shastri had offended Baji Rao by breaking off the intended nuptials of his son with the latter's sister-in-law and preventing his wife from visiting the Peshwa's palace. It does not seem that Baji Rao was enraged at this conduct of that Brahman upstart, or thought of depriving him of his life for this strange behavior of his. Of course, there was a time when the Peshwa would have been fully justified in taking the life of Gangadhar Shastri when the latter was playing the part of a spy on him and was intriguing with the English against him. But latterly, Gangadhar was reconciled to the Peshwa. His arrangement about the settlement of the pecuniary claims of Baji Rao on the Gaekwar was favorable to the Peshwa and it is not likely that the latter should have conspired to assassinate him for his useful services.

It is equally improbable that Trimbakji Danglia should have had any hand in the murder of the Shastri. What motive could have actuated him to perpetrate this foul deed? It is said that Trimbakji subsequently confessed that he had done the deed by the order of his master. Now, it is a well-known thing that those who confess either overdo a thing or underdo it. They never tell the truth. We have only to turn even to the confessions of Rousseau. No sensible man now places any reliance on the sensational confessions of Rousseau.

Even if Trimbakji did not confess in the spirit of bravado, we should not forget how confessions are sometimes extorted in India by the police and other administrators

* Part II, p. 293.

of so-called justice. It is a matter of everyday occurrence in India, how the innocent are made to confess. So the confession of Trimbakji that he had done the deed is not worth much and that he did it by the order of his master is highly improbable for the reason set forth above.

Gangadhar Shastri, as said above, had made many enemies in Baroda and he was highly unpopular there. When Elphinstone guaranteed his safety in the Peshwa's territories, some of his enemies came to the Deccan, it would seem, with the avowed object of murdering him ; for they knew that the Peshwa being not in the good books of the English, all the blame would fall on him and they themselves would go scot-free*

* Elphinstone had guranteed safe conduct to the Shastri : but he never took any trouble to protect his person. He should have furnished the Shastri with an escort to accompany him everywhere he went. Strange to say that, while the Shastri went to Pandharpur with the Peshwa, Elphinstone did not take any precautionary measure to protect his protege but went on a pleasant excursion to Ellora. His biographer writes that "Mr. Elphinstone took advantage of the opportuniity to enter on another exploring expedition, this to the far-famed caves of Ellora."

The Shastri was murdered during Elphinstone's absence at Ellora.

Edward Moor, well-known as the author of *The Hindu Pantheon,* towards the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century served in Puna under Sir Charles Malet, the British Resident in the court of the Peshwa. He was well acquainted with the last Peshwa Baji Rao. In his above-mentioned work, he refers to the horror in which the murder of Brahmans was held by the subjects of his Brahman Government. He quotes the following verses from Manu :

"A twice-born man who barely assaults a Brahman with intention to hurt him, shall be whirled about for a century in the hell called *Tamisra.*"

"He who, through ignorance of the law, sheds blood from the body of a Brahman, not engaged in battle, shall feel excessive pain in his future life."

"As many particles of dust as the blood shall roll up from the ground, for so many years shall the shedder of that blood be mangled by other animals in his next birth."

"Never shall the king slay a Brahman, though convicted of all possible crimes : let him banish the offender from his realm, but with all his property secure, and his body unhurt."

"No greater crime is known on earth than slaying a Brahman and the king, therefore, must not even form in his mind the idea of killing a priest."

From his long experience of and residence in Puna, Mr. Moor could give only three instances of Brahmans being put to death. He writes :

"The violent death of one of these persons, transcendentally divine, as they are deemed by Manu, it may be supposed, rarely occurs. I have, however, known of three being put to death, and that too at Puna, the immediate seat of Brahmanical government . . . . ."

Of these three the first was that of the notorious Ghasiram Kotwal. It cannot be denied that that man deserved the death that befell him. However, it should not be forgotten that he was stoned to death by Brahmans of the *Telinga* sect. After narrating the circumstances of the murder of this Brahman, Moor truly observes :

"I have heard it said and have, I think, seen it related that on such an occasion (that, however, of popular insurrection, is very uncommon in India,) the victim has been put in a bag, and beaten, to avoid the denunciation against shedding a Brahman's blood."

The second and the third instances of Brahmanicide mentioned by Moor, need not be referred to here.

These instances are cited to show the horror in which Brahmanicide was regarded during the regime of the Peshwas. The Peshwa, Baji Rao, was well-versed in the Shastras of the Hindus and

At the time when the Shastri was murdered, there were two agents of Sitaram Rowjee there. The grudge which Sitaram bore to the Shastri is well-known. It is also said said that

"The Shastri had in his possession a letter addressed by Govindrao to the Rani Takhtibai which contained the ominous threat that under certain contingencies the Shastree will never more look that way, that is, return to Baroda."*

If this be true then there can be no doubt that the Shastri's murder was planned and carried out by some of the numerous enemies he had made at Baroda.

But Elphinstone was determined to connect the Peshwa and his favorite, Trimbakji Danglia, with this murder. He is said to have held an investigation and proved that Danglia had engaged the assassins. What sort of investigation it was, and whether the accused Trimbakji had been given an opportunity to know the nature of the investigation, are matters which are not mentioned in official records. Trimbakji was an eyesore to Elphinstone and the English, because he was a favorite of the Peshwa. That in itself would not have been a great offence, had it not been for the other fact that he had been granted the lease of the much-coveted Ahmadabad farm. It has been already mentioned before, how desirous were the English to see the lease of that farm renewed in favor of their protege the Gaekwar. But when the Peshwa did not do so, they were determined on his humiliation and subsequent ruin.

It was then, we take it, a matter of political expediency to have connected the Peshwa and his favorite Trimbakji with the murder of Gangadhar Shastri. For the present it was decided not to consider the Peshwa as a party to the murder. But Elphinstone demanded of the Peshwa the surrender of his favorite Trimbakji to the English. Now, this demand on the part of Elphinstone was against the spirit of all International Law. Even assuming for the sake of argument that Trimbakji was implicated in the murder of Gangadhar Shastri, it does not follow that the English had any right to punish him. Both Trimbakji and the murdered were, as it were, the subjects of the Peshwa and so the latter had every authority to deal with the accused as he thought proper. The demands of justice would have been fully satisfied by punishing these Baroda agents, who had been caught, as it were, red-handed in the murder of the Shastri. But Elphinstone had ulterior designs in demanding the surrender of Trimbakji.†

besides he was a very superstitious man. Taking all these facts into consideration, it is extremely improbable that Baji Rao ordered, or Trimbakji Danglia executed, the murder of the Brahmān ambassador.

* *Baroda Gazetteer*, p. 222.

† In his letter to the Marquess of Hastings, Elphinstone set forth his reasons for demanding the immediate surrender of Trimbakji. He wrote :

"If Trimbakji expected to be accused by our government, ...he would probably have employed the interval in perverting the Peishwa's mind and engaging him in acts of violence at home, and in such foreign negotiations as are inconsistent with the alliance. This would be facilitated by the Peishwa remaining so long in suspense whether the accusation might not be directed against himself."

Thus it was political expediency which dictated Elphinstone to accuse Trimbakji of the murder without any proof, because Trimbakji was an able, ambitious and hence a dangerous man whose removal from Puna was desirable at any cost.

He did not care much whether the step he was going to take would wound the feelings of the Peshwa, whose sworn enemy he was. Baji Rao, as in honor bound, resisted Elphinstone's demand. But Elphinstone was inexorable. He was about to surround Puna with British troops and lay a regular siege to it.

How bitterly at this moment Baji Rao must have rued the day he signed the treaty of Bassein and entered into alliance with the English, who were not remarkable for faithfulness. Naturally of a timid disposition and, as said before, false to himself and false to the people over whom he ruled, Baji Rao's heart failed him when he found his capital was to be besieged by the British troops. He was obliged to make over his favorite Trimbakji to the English. The English incarcerated Trimbakji in the Thana Fort.

Thus by fraud and force, Elphinstone succeeded in depriving Baji Rao of two of his best well-wishers and faithful servants, viz., Kharsedji Modi and Trimbakji Danglia. Baji Rao's eyes were now opened. There is a proverb that even a worm would turn round and bite. Though timid and false to himself, the humiliation to which he had been subjected was enough to make him seek for vengeance on his British persecutors. The British Government was at this time engaged in war with Nepal, The reverses which the British troops suffered in that war must have made Baji Rao very jubilant and it is not at all unlikely that at this time he intrigued with other Maratha princes to concert measures to throw off the yoke of the English, which was so galling to him.

After the murder of Gangadhar Shastri there was a discussion for the settlement of the Peshwa's claims on the Gaekwar. But all these discussions ended in smoke. The Gaekwar, probably at the dictation of the English, did not accept the settlement which the Shastri had made. Seeing that no settlement had been arrived at between the

At the time when it pleased Elphinstone to accuse Trimbakji of the murder, he had no evidence worth speaking of against that unfortunate Maratha minister. It was after the flight of the Peshwa and the annexation of his territories that strong evidence is alleged to have been obtained by Elphinstone and the English to satisfy them that the Peshwa and Trimbakji planned the murder. Colebrooke, in his Life of Elphinstone, writes :

"There is no part of Indian History on which so full a light has been thrown, as the murder of the unfortunate Shastri, and the important events which followed. Our subsequent conquest of the country gave us sources of information which were improved by the local inquiries of Grant Duff, and we can trace the undercurrent of intrigue by the light of subsequent knowledge, and *with the aid that Mr. Elphinstone did not at the time possess.*" (The italics are ours.)

Of course, after the conquest, everything was possible. To curry favour with the victorious English, numbers of blackguards and intriguers of the type of Balaji Pant Natu came forward to give, nay, fabricate, false evidence against the fallen Peshwa and his minister. No reliance could be placed on such evidence.

That Trimbakji was not altogether a bad man is admitted even by Elphinstone himself. On May 8th, 1815, Elphinstone wrote in his diary :

"It is pleasant to see Trimbakji remember old friends and townsmen in his elevation, and this, with his care of his native village, building walls to it, etc., incline one to think well of him, *if his general character would admit of it.*" (The italics are ours.)

Of course, Elphinstone was strongly biased against Trimbakji and therefore, inspite of all the benevolent and charitable acts of Trimbakji, which he saw with his own eyes, he was not inclined to think well of him

Peshwa and the Gaekwar, it was the duty of the English to have acted as arbitrators and mediators, but this is exactly what they did not like to do; for had they done so, *they would not have got a pretext, a handle, to deprive the Peshwa of his territories or* to go to war with him.

Elphinstone and the British Government complained of Baji Rao's conduct, because he asserted that he had the right to nominate the Gaekwar's Diwan and also of enquiring into the Gaekwar's domestic concerns. In fact, Baji Rao looked upon the Gaekwar as his feudatory.

"This policy of the Peishwa met with the strong disapproval of the British Government, who considered that the only power left to the Peishwa of all his old connections with the Guicowar was that of granting investiture to the legal successor to the Baroda *Gadi.*"*

The British Government was not going to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Peshwa over the Gaekwar, for it considered that the Peshwa had lost his right by the Treaty of Bassein. To the Peshwa's mind this point was not so very clear and decisive, for we are told by Colonel Wallace (p. 207) that

"the assistance given to the Guicowar by the Honorable Company had been timely, and it had been efficacious; but none was deceived into the idea that it had been disinterested or gratuitous. The Guicowar state had been the utensil of the Honorable Company; it had been embraced as an ally when required, and dismissed when no longer wanted; treaties had been made respecting it, in which it was not consulted; treaties had been made with it which had been abrogated when it suited the Company's convenience; *sometimes it had been induced to wage war with the Peishwa as an independent state and then again, on the return of peace, it had been acknowledged as a vassal merely of the Maratha Empire; thus its external policy had been altogether dictated.*"

From the words put in italics in the above extract it is obvious how uncertain were the relations between the Peshwa and the Gaekwar. We cannot find fault with the Peshwa for trying to clearly define his connections with the Gaekwar.

But it was not the policy of the British Government to help the Peshwa now in any way in their power. They took no steps to settle his claims on the Gaekwar or clearly define his relations with him.

The course which the British Government now adopted towards the Peshwa must be admitted by all candid historians to be nothing short of treachery. The war with Nepal was now over, and so the British had time now to turn to other affairs. The Marquis of Hastings considered the Peshwa an easy game, and so he decided that the British arms should be turned against him. All the benefits which the British had obtained by their connection with him were now forgotten, and as he was no longer of any use to them, so he should be sacrificed now to gratify their ambition.

The territorial revenue of the Bombay Presidency was not at this time enough to support its civil, marine, and military establishments. All the costly establishments of the English, who had been always seeking ways and means to make themselves rich at the expense of the natives of this country, required money to fill the pockets of their employees. The provinces which formed the satrapy of the Peshwa were very

* *Baroda Gazetteer, p. 221.*

fertile and the revenue which the Peshwa derived from these provinces amounted to a crore and a half of rupees every year. The eyes of the worldly-minded, ambitious English naturally turned to them. Perhaps this might account for their not trying to compose the differences between the Peshwa and the Gaekwar and always trying to find a pretext for a quarrel with Baji Rao, through whose instrumentality they had so enormously benefited.

The English made every preparation for going to war with the Peshwa.

"On the 7th of April 1817, Lord Moira warned Sir Evan Napean that war between the British and the Peshwa was imminent...and that he was to hold himself in readiness, to seize the Peshwa's portion of Gujrat and the Northern portion of the Konkan."*

Thus it was not the Peshwa but the English who wanted war. And if the Peshwa was found to make warlike preparations, we cannot blame him; for knowing the sentiments of the English towards him, and seeing their preparations for war, Baji Rao naturally, as a precautionary measure and in self-defence, tried to amass troops.† But no one could overreach the English diplomatists because of their wonderful capacity for intrigues. Elphinstone's capacity for intrigues was notorious.

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* *Bombay Gazetteer*, Baroda volume, page 225.

† If we are to believe the testimony of two English officers, it would seem that it was never the intention of Baji Rao to go to war with the English. This will be evident from the following extract from a paper of Lieut. General Briggs published by Colebrooke in his *Life of Elphinstone*:

"The doctor, who was in the habit of passing an hour every day with Mr. Elphinstone reading Greek and Italian, was supposed to be in his (Peshwa's) confidence, though he was only treated as a common friend. The Peshwa begged that the doctor might be sent to attend some members of his family, and the kindness that he there received, and the manner in which the Peshwa spoke of his fidelity and attachment to the English deceived the doctor till the day when the war was declared. In the same manner he gained over the services of the English commandant of the contingent, who, to the last hour, professed to believe that the Peshwa would never make war with us."

The following account penned by General Briggs shows the feelings of gratitude which the Peshwa entertained for the British. General John Briggs writes:

"......At length, one day it was in April 1817 the Peshwa sent a message by his Minister that he desired to see Mr. Elphinstone, to confer on state affairs.

......On the arrival of Mr. Elphinstone and suit, the Peshwa was found sitting in a small private apartment, from which, after the usual compliments, he dismissed the attendants, and said, 'I have requested this meeting, Mr. Elphinstone, to endeavour to disabuse your mind of some injurious impressions you seem to have formed as to my feelings and intentions towards your Government. Remember that I have been connected with you from my childhood. Let me go back to the time when a cabal united against my father, now in heaven, on the death of his nephew, who was assassinated by his own guards in his palace, and when he, the next heir, came forward to claim his rights, you are aware how he was persecuted, and driven by the rebellious nobles out of his country. At the crisis there were the great chiefs, Holkar and Scindia and Gaekwar, to whom it would have been natural for him to apply for aid against his own subjects, but he passed them by, and placed himself under the protection of the British Government and made a treaty with it. Scarcely had I reached the age of manhood when an accident left the Masnud again vacant, and my enemies deprived me of my claim of succession. Your Government interfered, and I eventually obtained my rights. But my opponents were too strong, and, having marched an army to Poona, defeated my troops. I fled, not to seek assistance from my

The chief among the intriguers whom Elphinstone looked upon as his friends and on whose information he acted was Balaji Pant Natu, a name which should be held in detestation by every Indian. His conduct was fully exposed to the world by the agent of the deposed Raja of Satara, Rango Bapuji. Balaji Pant Natu was capable of every dishonest and mean act in order to curry favour with the English. And yet he was the confidential friend of Elphinstone, who followed his advice and acted on his information.*

countrymen, but from the English at Bombay, and by your armies I was restored to my capital and my throne. How can you believe that, with all this load of obligation to your Government, I should ever have a design to make war against it ? My whole body, from my head to feet, has been nourished by the salt of the English. Look at the situation, however, from another point of view. I am not so ignorant of the history of British power in this country as not to know that whosoever has engaged in war with it has been defeated, and his sovereignty has passed away. In former times, when Hyder Ally, aided by the French, made war against the English, he could gain no ground , and it is said that on his death-bed he urged his son, Tippu Sultan, to keep at peace and to cuitivate the friendship of the English. He was too proud and too confident. In two great wars, although assisted by the French, Tippu was beaten, his territories divided, and at last he was destroyed. Since my re-establishment at Poona, have I not witnessed the defeat of those regular troops of infantry and artillery, trained under European officers for the great Mahratta chiefs, Holkar and Sindia, who carried everything before them in Hindustan, but who when they ventured to oppose the English, were beaten time after time with heavy losses and eventually reduced to make peace at great sacrifices of territory and treasure ? In my case, however, I ask where are the regular troops ? Where are my infantry or my guns to cope with your enemies ? Yet, I am suspected of desiring to engage in war against my best friends.'

"During the whole of this speech, which was delivered in his native tongue, Mahrattee, the Peshwa was perfectly cool, nor did he exhibit any symptoms either of agitation or resentment."

Memoir of Jofin Briggs, pp. 44-45.

* Balaji Pant Natu was a menial employed on 5 or 6 rupees a month at Bhore in the Satara District. From Bhore he went to Puna and was in the service of the Rastia Sardars. These Sardars were not in the good graces of the Peshwa Baji Rao. Balaji Pant Natu was introduced into the British Residency at Puna as an agent of the Rastia Sardars. In that capacity he used to tell the successive British Residents, tales and fibs against the Peshwa, for he thought that by so doing he would further the cause of his masters, the Rastia Sardars. He so far ingratiated himself with Elphinstone that the latter looked upon him as his right-hand man, and depended upon him for all informations regarding the Peshwa and his doings.

After the overthrow of the Peshwa, Balaji Pant Natu was highly praised and recommended to the Governor-General of India by Elphinstone for the grant of a jaghire. In his letter to Mr. John Adam, Chief Secretary to Government, Fort William, dated camp at Corygaum, 5th September, 1818, Elpinstone wrote :

......The services of Balaji Pant have been before brought to the notice of his Excellency the most noble the Governor-General ; he has since conducted himself with exemplary fidelity notwithstanding the Peishwa's frequent attempts to corrupt him. His services were of the greatest use both during the war and the period which preceded it and he is at present employed under Captain Grant with the Raja of Satara, the most confidential situation held by any native in this part of the country. I therefore beg leave earnestly to recommend the villages mentioned in the enclosed should be confirmed to him by a regular Enam grant under the seal of the Governor-General or under mine by His Excellency's authority.

"His present salary is calculated on the principle of his receiving the pension formerly granted

Another confidential friend of Elphinstone was Yashvantrav Ghorepade. Regarding this man, the author of the Puna volume of the *Bombay Gazetteer* (part II, p. 299) writes :

"Yashvantrav Ghorepade, a friend of Mr Elphinstone and of many British officers, was at this time in disgrace with Mr. Elphinstone on account of some intrigues."

But Yashvantrav knew the royal road to favour with Elphinstone. The latter hated the Peshwa like anything and so any cock and bull story against Baji Rao would not only please Elphinstone but certainly secure his favour and good-will. So all the evidence of the so-called treachery of the Peshwa rests on Elphinstone's correspondence, who depended for information on such men as Balaji Pant Natu and Yashvantrav Ghorepade.

We have said before that Baji Rao's preparations were in their very nature indicatory of self-defence. Elphinstone, knowing that the English Government wanted to go to war with the Peshwa, made some extraordinary demands on him.* Trimbakji Danglia had been confined at Tannah under the guard of British troops. But he escaped from his place of confinement and was again at large. It did not reflect much credit on the vigilance of the English, that one of their prisoners escaped from their prison without their knowing anything about it. Trimbakji was said to be in the Peshwa's territory. Without showing much respect or courtesy to the Peshwa, Elphinstone taxed him in a very offensive manner to deliver up Trimbakji, or war with the English must follow. He demanded

to him. I would therefore not recommend his pension being reduced in consequence of his new grant. It is indeed desirable to make the grant in a spirit of liberality, as it is the first reward yet made to any of our immediate dependants, and as the zeal with which we are served must depend on those rewards. The grant will of course be included in the one I have recommended for rewards to adherents."

Of course the Governor-General approved of the recommendation of Elphinstone. When the latter left India for good, he gave the following certificate to Balaji Pant Natu written with his own hand:

"Balaji Pant Natoo was connected with the Poona Residency from the time of Sir Barry Close in 1803 or 4. He entered into the residency employments about 1816 and in the troubles that followed and in the settlement of the country showed himself an able, zealous, and trustworthy public servant. He was my principal native agent during most of the time I was Commissioner in the Deccan, was consulted by me on all subjects and gave me every reason to be satisfied with his judgment and fidelity.

Bombay, 13th November, 1829.

(Sd.) M. Elphinstone."

* How Elphinstone was anxious for the sight of a war will be evident from the following extract from his diary :

"Active employment, bodily or mental, here or in a camp ; enlarging my knowledge, keeping awake my imagination ; enterprising journeys ; *the sight of a war if possible* ; bustle at Calcutta ; applause for zeal and energy—these must be the grand objects of my desires, and must not be longed for, but prized or worked for."

Again, under April 6th, 1817, he entered in his diary :

"I think a quarrel with the Peishwa desirable, and therefore look on everything with perfect security, except the prospect of undecided conduct on the part of Lord Moira. Even on the 31st I did not feel the slightest anxiety."

the surrender of Trimbakji within a month and the immediate delivery of the three hill forts of Sinhgad, Purandhar and Raigad as a pledge that Trimbakji would be surrendered.* Elphinstone was going to invest Puna with British troops, when on the 8th May, 1817, Baji Rao issued an order for the surrender of the three hill forts. With the humiliation inflicted on the Peshwa, one would have thought that the English would have been quite content. But the English were quite prepared for the war. So to add insult to injury, the Brahman chief was obliged to sign the treaty known as Treaty of Puna, dated the 13th June, 1817. This was forced on him in a manner which he could not resist. The English wanted a pretext for this new treaty and so it was alleged to be necessary as a compensation for the murder of Gangadhar Shastri. Two years had elapsed since the murder of that Brahman ambassador, and it would be remembered that it was convenient for the English Government to affect to believe that the Peshwa was not a party to the murder. But circumstances had now altered, and so the English raked up the old matter and made the Peshwa confess at the point of the bayonet that he had a hand in the murder of Gangadhar Shastri. The Peshwa

* Trimbakji was confined a prisoner in Chunar fort, not far distant from Benares. Here he was visited by several European travellers, the most noted of whom was Bishop Heber, who saw him in September, 1924 and in his Indian journal writes that Trimbakji was "confined with great strictness, having an European as well as Sepoy guard, and never being trusted out of sight of the sentries. Even his bed-chamber has three grated windows open into the verandah, which serves as guard room . . . . a little garden shaded with a peepul tree which he has planted very prettily with balsams and other flowers. Four of his own servants are allowed to attend him, but they are always searched before they quit or return to the fort, and must be always there at night. He is a little, lively, irritable looking man, dressed, when I saw him, in a dirty cotton mantle, with a broad red border thrown carelessly over his head and shoulders. . . . . . . He has been now, I believe, five years in prison and seems likely to remain there during life, or till the death of his patron and tool, Bajee Rao, may lessen his power of doing mischief. He has often offered to give security to any amount for his good behaviour. . . . . . but his applications have been in vain. He attributes their failure to Mr. Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, who is, he says . . . . resolutely fixed on keeping him in prison and urging the supreme court to distrust all his protestations. His life must now be dismally monotonous and wearisome. Though a Brahmin of high caste and so long a minister of State, he can neither read nor write . . . ."

There can be little doubt that the harshness and rigour of his confinement undermined his health; for another European traveller, Major Archer, in visting Chunar on February 16, 1829, wrote about him :

"His confinement has continued since 1818, but his term is nearly bounded by the great enemy, Death, ; his medical attendants declaring he cannot last many months. When we passed, his liver was so much affected as to protrude his side to the size of a half quartern loaf. His state was one of great emaciation, and he was a truly pitiable object. His prayer (and it was unheeded) was to be permitted to die at Benares, but the suspicions of the Government are too lively for this indulgence—no great one. Trimbuck was a wicked monster ; but the good accruing from allowing him to go loose, creating a favourable opinion of British generosity, would more than balance the chance of danger or inconvenience which such a measure might be thought to risk. The boon to an expiring man would, it is conceived, impress the natives with the notions that our mercy was equal to our power, and that generosity was nearly allied to our justice." Pp. 108-109, vol. II., Tours in Upper India and in parts of the Himalayas mountains ; with accounts of the native princes &c., by Major Arthur, late Aide-de-camp to Lord Combermere ; London, 1833.

was a weak man and, as repeatedly said above, he was false to himself. To him power was sweet, and the friendship with the English was sweeter still. To maintain the show of authority and also the friendship of the English, he was ready to do anything. So there was not much difficulty for Elphinstone to extort the so-called confession of the murder of the Shastri from the Peshwa. Baji Rao did not possess that metal of which Pratap Singh, the Raja of Satara, was made. When the English charged the Raja of Satara with conspiring against them, the Raja was told that if he would sign a paper admitting his guilt, all differences then existing should fall into oblivion. It is well-known how the Raja lost his kingdom but did not sign that paper. The Raja was true to himself, which the Peshwa was not. For reasons already adduced before, it is impossible to believe that the Peshwa was guilty of the murder. But supposing that Baji Rao was a party to the murder, why were two years allowed to expire before any reparation was demanded of him?

By this new treaty of Puna, Baji Rao lost most of his fertile provinces, and his resources were seriously crippled. The British Government did not arbitrate to settle the pecuniary demands of the Peshwa on the Gaekwar, but by this treaty the Peshwa was made to part with his share of the revenue of Gujrat in settlement of all his claims on the Gaekwar. Of course, the English had all along an eye on the fertile provinces of Gujrat, and the Peshwa and Trimbakji Danglia incurred their displeasure because the lease of the Ahmadabad Farm was not renewed in favour of the Gaekwar but was given to Trimbakji.

The blow dealt to the Peshwa by this new Treaty was one from which it was difficult for him to recover. He was so much disgusted with all these transactions that he left Puna and went to Pandharpur and thence to Mahuli in the vicinity of Satara at the junction of the two rivers Krisna and Yena and hence a place regarded as sacred by all devout Hindus. It was at this place that he requested Malcolm to see him—a request which Malcolm complied with. Baji Rao complained of his crippled state under the Treaty of Puna and of the loss of the friendship of the English, and declared his longing to have the friendship renewed. Malcolm advised him to collect troops and send a contingent to the aid of the English in the coming war with the Pindaris. Kaye writes:

"When in August, Malcolm was importuned to visit him, he (Baji Rao) had appeared to be really sincere in the expression of his desire to stand fast by the British alliance, but he had then been much exasperated by recent transactions—an unwelcome treaty had been forced upon him and it was not difficult, in this frame of mind, to persuade him that the sovereignty of the Marhattas was threatened; and that his true interest lay in hostility to the British Government. So the troops that he had collected avowedly with the intention of aiding our operations, were now held together for the purpose of resisting them.

"Such a gathering of troops at Poonah could have but one result. A large body of ill-disciplined Mahratta soldiers were little likely, under any circumstances, to remain quiescent in the neighbourhood of the capital. It was necessary that they should commit excesses of some kind, and the temper which they manifested in the autumn of 1817 rendered certain the direction in which excesses would be committed. Their minds had been inflamed by false (?) representations of the hostile designs of

the British. They believed that their very existence, as a military body, was threatened and that there would soon be nothing but Company's service from one end of India to the other."*

When such were the feelings of the Marathas in general against the English, we cannot reasonably blame Baji Rao for his inability to send any contingent to the aid of the English. Vengeance sleeps long, but it never dies. Baji Rao, though a weak man and false to himself, tried to get rid of the halter which had been tightened round his neck by the English. He was their prisoner and he tried to break out of the prison house. It is true, as observed by Kaye, that Baji Rao "had been much exasperated by the recent transactions." Seeing the faithlessness of the English, he could not easily believe that they had not some ulterior motives in requesting him to send a contingent of troops to their aid. What he probably suspected was that the English meditated treachery. By denuding his territories of troops, it would be an easy task for the English to force another unwelcome treaty on him and to further cripple his state. This thought was not unnatural for him to indulge in, seeing the treatment he had been subjected to.

His subjects also, seeing the state of affairs, cried loudly for war. The Peshwa was no military genius. He did not learn the lesson from the other Indian powers coming to grief by the employment of foreign Christian mercenaries in their armies. Those Christians were never faithful to those whose salt they had eaten. He had in his army such Christian officers. One of them was General Pott. When hostilities broke out, Baji Rao ordered him to fight the Christian British. He refused to obey his order, saying he would not fight against men of his colour, creed and country. Had Baji Rao been a prudent prince, he would have at once got him court-martialled and awarded him the capital punishment which he fully deserved. He had not the courage to do it. So the result was that not only General Pott and others of his co-religionists and men of his colour deserted, but also betrayed him.

But Bapu Gokhle pledged his honor and offered his service to lead the troops against the English. No British author has a word to say against this Maratha chief. He had no selfish motive to serve by siding with the Peshwa.

Bapu Gokhle was not an enemy of the English. The dispatches of the Duke of Wellington bear testimony to the assistance which he rendered to them. He was instrumental also to a certain extent in getting the Treaty of Bassein signed by the Peshwa. Taking all these facts into consideration, it cannot be said that he was a bitter enemy of the English. No, he was disgusted with the 'grasping policy' of the English and sincerely believed that they were bent upon the destruction of the Maratha nation.

Bapu Gokhle was now appointed as the Peshwa's commander-in-chief. But Elphinstone was not idle. The exaggerated reports as to the Peshwa's doings and the

* *Life and Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm*, Vol. II. p. 191.

In an official despatch, Elphinstone wrote:

"Openness and vigor of His Highness's preparations, joined, perhaps, with some pity for his losses and to some hope of the restoration of the Mahratta greatness, render His Highness's cause more popular than it used to be; . . . . ." Colebrooke's *Life of Elphinstone*, I. 371.

lies as to his movements which emissaries and confidential friends like Balaji Pant Natu whispered into Elphinstone's ears led him to ask the British troops to come to his assistance at once.* Two English commanders, General Smith and Colonel

* From the procrastination and delay on the part of the Peshwa and his commander-in-chief it is not unreasonable to suppose that they did not seriously think of going to war with the English. They would have also in all probability sent the contingent to the aid of the English, but Elphinstone's doings provoked the war. His biographer, Sir T. E. Colebroke, writes:

"The cantonment had been placed in the immediate vicinity of the city by Sir Arthur Wellesley, with a view to its defence ; but it was surrounded by enclosures, and owing to close proximity of the Peshwa's army, an attack might have been made without a moment's warning......

"To withdraw the troops from their dangerous position was to provoke the hostility for which the court was preparing......The precautionary step, however, admitted of no delay, and Mr. Elphinstone quietly intimated to the Peshwa that Sir Thomas Hislop's orders to move the troops to Kirkee would be acted upon immediately. Orders were sent to hasten the march of a European regiment from Bombay, and General Smith was requested to send back a light battalion to the cantonment at Siroor." (Vol. I. p. 373).

It does not appear from the official records that Elphinstone ever asked the Peshwa to send his contingent to the aid of the British ; he never remonstrated with him for levying such a large number of troops. But on the contrary, we find Elphinstone himself making every preparation for war and thus provoked the Peshwa and the Mahrattas to go to war against the English. His biographer writes :

"On the afternoon of October 30th, the British battalion marched into the cantonment, and Mr. Elphinstone hesitated no longer to order the withdrawal of the whole force to a well-chosen position four miles from the city, an act which both parties understood as a preparation for war. This seasonable reinforcement, and the additional security we obtained by the position of the troops, put an end to the motives which made Mr. Elphinstone desire to anticipate hostilities, and he now calmly awaited the attack, knowing the moral importance which belongs to the fact of not appearing to be the aggressor in such a conflict." (Vol. I. p. 375).

Thus it is evident that Elphinstone did everything in his power to provoke the war.

The want of plan of campaign also shows that the Peshwa and his ministers never contemplated seriously to go to war with the English. Bapu Gokhle was credited with possessing a thorough knowledge of the tactics of European warfare. Hence, had he strong and good grounds to believe that the Peshwa meant war with the English, it is not likely that he would have committed those fatal mistakes which cost him his life and the Peshwa his kingdom. In all probability he would have made his plan of campaign such as would have led him to success, victory and glory, had the Peshwa been determined on war with the English. The author of "Fifteen Years in India" writes :

Thoughtless, in reflecting upon what he he saw and heard, was much at a loss to account for the conduct of the Peishwa, who, considering it a hopeless undertaking again to attack Colonel Burr, nevertheless remained near Poonah in a position backed by a chain of high hills, affording no retreat but through difficult passes, while an enemy, flushed with success and inflamed with resentment, was approaching to attack him. In short, Charles expected that the force would have been immediately led against the enemy, with the certainty of complete success ; he inferred that the Peshwa had committed a fatal error by awaiting the junction of General Smith's division with that of Colonel Burr, and that after his failure at Kirkee, his real interests demanded a retreat from Poonah into the plains of the Deccan, where his numerous cavalry would have been useful in harrassing a pursuing enemy and in keeping up the spirit of his confederates."

It seems that the Peshwa had no intention to go to war with the English, but seeing the threatening position of the English, there was no other alternative for him than to attack them without forming any definite plan of campaign.

Bappoo Goklah

Burr, came with their troops to Puna and on the 5th November 1817 was fought the memorable battle of Kirki, in which the Peshwa's troops were defeated. The Peshwa watched the battle from the celebrated Parvati Temple. The defeat did not cast any reflection on Bapu Gokhle's military skill: for not having worthy generals under him, he had to plan and conduct every movement of the troops. Besides there were traitors in his camp who not only supplied information to the Resident, Mr. Elphinstone, but did everything in their power to defeat Bapu Gokhle's undertkaing. Moreover, his advice to attack the English before the junction of the troops under General Smith and Colonel Burr could take place, was not attended to. All these points satisfactorily account for the defeat of the Peshwa at Kirki. The author of "Fifteen Years in India," who was an officer and took part in the battle at Kirki, thus bears testimony to the high military skill possessed by Gokhle:

"Gokhle's men were individually brave and he was an experienced and able general, well acquainted with our tactics, for he had fought as an auxiliary under Sir Arthur Wellesley, and seen some of the most dashing service in India; but his troops being in a disorganised state, and without that mutual dependence upon each other which discipline ensures, he never could actuate them with his own brave spirit, and they invariably deserted him in the hour of trial."*

The same author in another place of his work thus speaks of him:

"His (Gokhle's) person was large, his features fine and manly, and his complexion nearly fair......It is impossible not to respect the spirit of Gokhle. The judgment with which he prepared to receive General Smith was only equalled by his valour and skill in bravely endeavouring to retrieve the day......and the muse of history will encircle his name with a laurel for fidelity and devotion in his country's cause."†

After the battle of Kirki, the Peshwa left Puna as a fugitive, still at the head of a large army under the command of Bapu Gokhle. Several battles were still fought with varying fortunes so inseparable from war. But the death of his able commander-in-chief, Bapu Gokhle, seemed to have damped his spirit and there being no other general who could have properly taken his place, and he himself being of a timid nature and possessing no military training, the Peshwa was now anxious to sue for peace and accordingly he made overtures to Malcolm.

Elphinstone knew fully well how unpopular the English were in the Deccan and even the death and capture of the Peshwa would not crush their spirit of independence. The Marathas were not going to part with their liberty. To pacify them he commenced intriguing with the Raja of Satara.§ That prince was at that time in the

* *Fifteen Years in India*: or Sketches of a Soldier's Life. From the journal of an official in His Majesty's service. London, 1823. p. 492,

† *Ibid.*, pp. 304, 505.

§ The manner in which, through the instrumentality of Balaji Pant Natu and by specious promises, Mr. Elphinstone succeeded in making the Raja of Satara desert the Peshwa has been described on the authoriry of documents in my *Story of Satara*, in which I have tried to expose the intrigues and conspiracies that had been resorted to by Elphinstone to bring about the downfall and defeat of the Peshwa. In no history of India written by European authors is there any mention of the Raja of Satara helping the English to restore tranquility in the Deccan by his being made to issue the Proclamation to the inhabitants of the Maharashtra to disown the Peshwa and side

camp of the fugitive Peshwa. Mr. Elphinstone by means of his emissaries succeeded in getting hold of his person and used him as a trump card in this political game.

But the timid Baji Rao lost all heart to any longer resist the English. He made overtures to Malcolm, which were very favourably received, the reasons for which Malcolm thus wrote to the Chief Secretary to Government:

"The opportunities I have had of judging the state of feeling of every class, from the prince to the lowest inhabitant of this extensive empire, now and formerly subject to the Mahrattas, make me not hesitate in affirming that so far as both the fame of the British Government and the tranquility of India are concerned, the submission of Baji Rao and voluntary abdication of his power are objects far more desirable than either his captivity or death......should he be slain, his fate would excite pity, and might stimulate ambition, as the discontented would probably, either now or hereafter, rally round a real or pretended heir to his high station. If he were made prisoner, sympathy would attend him and the enemies of the English Government would continue to cherish hopes of his one day effecting his escape. But if he dismisses his adherents, throws himself upon our generosity and voluntarily resigns his power, the effect, so far as general impression is concerned, will be complete, and none will be found to persist in defending a cause which the ruler himself has abandoned."*

These considerations prompted Malcolm to obtain, as soon as possible, the voluntary submission of Baji Rao. He tempted Baji Rao with a large pension of eight lakhs of rupees a year. The bait was tempting to the Peshwa and he was very easily netted, thus sealing the doom of the line of the Peshwas.

It was not from any spirit of generosity but from sheer selfishness that Malcolm was prompted to grant the pension of eight lakhs to Baji Rao. This will be apparent from his letters, a few extracts from which are given below. To Sir Thomas Munro he wrote afterwards:

"I have not been so happy in this case as to anticipate the wishes of the Governor-General. He expected Baji Rao would get no such terms: that his distress would force him to submit on any conditions; and that his enormities deprived him of all right either to princely treatment or princely pension. I think the lord will, when he hears all, regret the precipitation with which he formed his judgment. In the first place, he will find that inspite of the Report made by every commanding officer who ever touched Baji Rao that he had destroyed him, that the latter was not destroyed, but had about six thousand good horses and five thousand infantry, and the gates of Asseer wide open, all his property sent in there, and half his councillors praying him to follow it, while Jeswant Rao Lar was passionatley ambitious of being a martyr in the cause of the Marhatta soverign; add to this the impossibility of besieging Asseer till after the rains—the difficulty of even half blockading it, and the agitated state of the country—and then let the lord pronounce the article I purchased was worth the price I paid; and he will find it proved I could not get it cheaper."†

Again in a letter to Mr. Adam, dated 19th June, 1818, Malcolm declared, in the first place, that the condition of Baji Rao was not so desperate at the beginning of June

with the English in the pursuit and conquest of that Brahman chieftain. The Raja of Satara being the descendant of Shivaji the Great, was the undoubted sovereign of the Marathas; the people owing allegiance to him flocked to his standard and thus they ceased espousing the cause of Baji Rao the Peshwa.

* Kaye's *Life of Malcolm* II, 24,

† *Ibid.*, p. 257.

but that he might have protracted the war, with no hope assuredly of eventual success but with the certainty of keeping our armies for some time in the field at a ruinous expense to the State.

Baji Rao made his submission in June, 1818, and was sent to Bithoor, near Cawnpore, on the river Ganges, where he died at an advanced age in 1850. He was the last of the Peshwas and his political career terminated in 1818.

English writers have described him as addicted to all sorts of debauchery, and as a cruel, oppressive and tyrannical sovereign. The falsity of these statements will become evident when we remember the fact of the old age which he attained and the vigorous physical constitution which he always maintained—quite impossible for any man addicted to debauchey.

But even assuming that he was a debauched prince, was he worse than many of the sovereigns of that period ? Why do English writers take delight in painting him in the blackest colours possible, forgetting that the members of their own royal family of that period were not immaculate saints? What about the secret history of the Georges and the mysteries of the Court of London ?

If it be true that he was cruel and oppressive to his subjects, then it would have been quite impossible for his subjects to have attained that material prosperity which they undoubtedly did under his *regime*. The population of Puna at that time was much larger than it is now, and as to its prosperous condition, an Englishman has borne testimony as follows :

"On a late excursion into the Deccan I was exceedingly pleased and surprised to observe the great appearance of prosperity which the city of Poonah exhibited, and which was the more remarkable after the scenes of desolation, plunder and famine, it had been so lately subjected to ; all the principal streets and bazars were crowded with people, whose dress and general appearance displayed symptoms of comfort and happiness, of business and industry, not to be exceeded in any of our own great commercial towns. The whole, indeed, was a smiling scene of general welfare and abundance. On noticing this to the Resident, he informed me that the Peishwa, since his return, with a view of promoting the prosperity of Poonah, had exempted it and the surrounding country from every description of tax ; and to prevent the possibility of exactions unknown to himself, had even abolished the office of Cutwal. This fact is at least one proof, among various others, of the practicability of introducing what are termed the European principles of economy into Indian societies, with the same happy effects as have been experienced elsewhere."*

But it must be admitted that Baji Rao was a timid man and false to himself, for he tried to curry favour with the English. Had he not done so, he would have met with treatment far different from what he did.

He was an unlucky man and though possessing the sweetest of tempers and most fascinating manners, the times were against him and he was a victim of base intrigues and foul conspiracies on the part of the English in general and Elphinstone in particular. From the analysis of the facts which have been set forth above, it will be gathered that Elphinstone all along treated him with scant courtesy and defied his authority, and, by forcing on him the unwelcome treaty of 1817, provoked him to war, which

* R. Richards, 23rd July, 1801. Quoted by Mr. William Digby, C.I.E., in his *"Prosperous British India—a Revelation"*, page 450.

certainly was not of Baji Rao's own seeking. Then it should be remembered how Elphinstone surrounded the Peshwa with spies and paid emissaries and intriguers to calumniate him and keep himself informed of all his doings.* An upright Resident would have certainly prevented those occurrences which brought the Peshwa to ruin and would have made the English name famous for justice and fair play. But in all the acts of Elphinstone are to be seen his meanness of spirit and selfish motives for aggrandisement at the expense of the Peshwa.†

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* "So complete was our informaton, that one of the charges made by Baji Rao to Sir J. Malcolm at Maholy against Mr. Elphinstone, was, that he was so completely watched that the latter knew the very dishes that were served at his meals."

(Lieut.-General Briggs's memorandum, quoted by Sir T. E. Colebrooke in his *Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone* ; Vol. I, p. 303.)

† It was the policy of the British Government of India of the day to bring about the ruin of the Peshwa, for he was considered to be the main link which had held together the Maratha Confederacy, and by his being struck out of the chain that confederacy was disunited for ever.

In order to effect the ruin of the Peshwa, he was ill treated and provoked to hostilities by the British authorities. Some color is lent to this view by the Parliamentary Papers relating to the Raja of Satara, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 18th August, 1843. On page 914 of these Papers it is stated :

"The dispute between the Peishwa and the English might have been adjusted after having been investigated, through Gangadhar Shastree, had the mutual agreement in question not been pledged."

What "the mutual agreement" was is described as follows in these Papers :

"In consequence of Baji Rao's conduct, the disaffection of the people, and the opposition he had caused to His Highness the Maharaja, and, in order to adjust the irregularity, His Highness the Maharaja considered that a man of great riches will of course have weight with a great one ; and Baji Rao was reconciled with the English, and their business commenced forthwith.

"Chutoorsing Raja Bhoslay, who deputed Jaderow Dadrou and Bapoo Phurness to the Governor-General while he was at Delhi, requested an order to the Governor, Mr. Duncan, at Bombay, for the management of the country, who, in reply, stated that the request cannot be acceded to until any differences are brought into the treaty which has been made between the English Government and Baji Rao Peishwa ; and if such should happen, His Highness should rest assured that, he being the possesser of the dominion, it shall then revert to him.

"Afterwards Mr. Elphinstone, the late Governor of Bombay, who for the purpose of obtaining information relative to the affair of Kolapoorkur, invited Balwantrow Malahar, the Chitnees Pandit Soomunt, and his father, when they both satisfied Mr. Elphinstone of the supreme power of his Highness over the chieftains, as the Peishwa pretended to be independent of His Highness. Mr. Elphinstone, on having been explained by them the fact, stated, that when any differences occur in the treaty between the English and Baji Rao, or should he anywhere levy war, then His Highness the Maharaja should be confident of my word which I have just pledged, for the restoration of his Government.

CHAPTER LV

APPA SAHEB, THE RAJA OF NAGPUR

The Maratha prince of the family of Bhonsle, with his capital at Nagpur, was called in Marathi chronicles the Raja of Berar. But after the Second Maratha War, Berar was taken from him and handed over to the Nizam. Hence, although he was often styled Raja of Berar, yet correctly his appellation should be the Raja of Nagpur. The name of the Raja—at the time when the Marquis of Hastings was moving troops to ostentatiously ruin the Pindaris but in reality to deprive the Maratha princes of their territories and independence—was Appa Saheb. After the Second Maratha War, the Raja of Nagpur, although often requested to enter into the Subsidiary Alliance with the East India Company, very wisely declined to do so. But hardly a dozen years had elapsed since that war, when circumstances arose which obliged the ruling prince of Nagpur to conclude a treaty with the British Government and allow their troops to take the place of those of his own dominion.

After the Second Maratha War, Elphinstone was accredited to the Court at Nagpur as representative of the British Government. He served as Resident at Nagpur for four years. The manner in which he carried on intrigues with the officers and ministers of that principality, demoralized them and paved the way to the Subsidiary Alliance, which seemed to have been the object which the then British Indian Government had in view. Elphinstone was a creature of the Duke of Wellington and had been trained in his school of diplomacy. Wellington was instrumental in gettting him appointed as Envoy to the Court of Nagpur. In recommending Elphinstone to his brother, the then Governor-General of India, the hero of Assaye wrote:

"Upon the occasion of mentioning Mr. Elphinstone, it is but justice to that gentleman to inform your Excellency that I have received the greatest assistance from him since he has been with me. He is well versed in the language, has experience and a knowledge of the Maratha powers and their relation with each other and with the British Government and its allies. He has been present in all the actions which have been fought in this quarter during the war, and at all the sieges. He is acquainted with every transaction that has taken place, *and with my sentiments upon all subjects.* I therefore take the liberty of recommending him to your Excellency." (Wellington Despatches, II, 595).

The words put in italics require to be specially taken note of. The Iron Duke had succeeded in making Elphinstone a past master in the craft of the Machiavellian diplomacy, and initiating him in the art of intrigue, all which had for their object the ruin of the princes to whose courts these Envoys were accredited.

At the time when Elphinstone was sent to Nagpur he was only 24 years of age and seemed not to have been well versed in the art of intrigue which passed for diplomacy. We are told by his biographer, Sir J. E. Colebrooke, that

"The hardest of his tasks remained when the letter of the treaty was fulfilled. The aim of the British Government, in insisting that a British representative should reside at the Court, was not merely to cultivate general relations of amity, but to provide against future ruptures.

Mr. Elphinstone's instructions assumed that a sovereign whose treachery was notorious, and whose sacrifices had been so great, might be induced to renew the war, in the hope of recovering part of what he had lost. The new secretary was therefore enjoined to be accurately informed of all that passed in the Durbar, particularly to watch the embassies of Sindia and Holkar, and at the same time obtain distinct information of the numbers and disposition of the Raja's troops. It will appear that this portion of Mr. Elphinstone's instructions caused him no little embarassment. The information required could only be obtained through the ministers themselves : and *to probe such sources of intelligence involved a course of intrigue that was repugnant to his nature.*"*

The words italicised in the above extract show that at the time he was sent to Nagpur, Elphinstone was not well versed in the art of intriguing. It seems that he turned to his patron, Sir Arthur Wellesley, to come to his rescue, and wrote to him for instructions on the subject. The reply to Elphinstone's letter was characterestic of the future conqueror of Napoleon. General Wellesley wrote :

"In answer to your letter of the 6th, I beg you will do whatever you think necessary to procure intelligence. If you think that Jye Kishen Ram will procure it for you or give it to you, promise to recommed him to the Governor-General, and write to his Excellency on the subject."†

General Wellesley's recommendation in plain language meant corruption. This is evident from another letter of his to Elphinstone in which he wrote:

"Before Ram Chunder went away he offered his services. I recommend him to you. He appears a shrewd fellow, and he has certainly been employed by the Raja in his most important negotiations. I have recommended him to the Governor-General for a pension of 6,000 rupees a year. I think he will give you useful intelligence."§

Thus Elphinstone was enjoined to raise traitors in the camp of the Raja, by holding out temptations to them. Yet Sir Arthur Wellesley is looked upon as a paragon of all Christian virtues and must have prayed eveiy day, "Lead us not into temptations, but deliver us from all evils."

Although Elphinstone did not succeed in involving the Bhonsla Raj in ruin, or inflicting the curse of the Subsidiary Alliance on that prince, for we are told that 'the Raja appears to have acted in a straightforward way' and that he 'remained steady to his resolve to avoid a new rupture'; yet the lessons in the art of intrigue which he had learnt at Nagpur, he brought to good use when he was appointed at Puna, for there he succeeded in bringing about the downfall of the Peshwa.

But when the Marquis of Hastings went to war with the Marathas, Elphinstone was not the Resident at Nagpur, and the reigning prince was Appa Saheb. The Raja who had signed the treaty with the British was now dead; and the Nagpur state had also entered into Subsidiary Alliance with the East India Company.

Mr. Jenkins was the Resident now and he was a bosom friend of Elphinstone. The biographer of Elphinstone writes :

"Like Elphinstone, Jenkins had commenced his diplomatic career during the Mahratta war, which brought so many of our best Indian statesmen to the front. Ten years later, Jenkins, like Elphinstone, had to contend with the intrigues, and ultimately with the open hostility of a Mahratta Court, at a

* Vol. I., p. 112.

† *Ibid.*, p. 113.

§ *Ibid.*

crisis of Indian history. To complete the parallel, these two Indian statesmen had congenial pursuits."*

Does it not follow, therefore, that Jenkins must have adopted the same diplomatic tactics at Nagpur, which Elphinstone did at Puna?

But it will be necessary to narrate in detail the events which preceded the hostilities between Appa Saheb and the troops of the Company. As long as Raghuji Bhonsla, the sovereign of Nagpur, who was a party to the Treaty of Deogaum, was alive, he did not, and would not, part with his indepenence by entering into a subsidiary alliance with the East India Company. Times without number their government had asked him through their representative at Nagpur to form such an alliance. But all their attempts failed, as they were bound to do, for Raghuji had no faith in them, as he was well acquainted with their character. But his death in April, 1816, was hailed with delight by them, for now was the opportunity for them to get the object so dear to their hearts accomplished. The long train of intrigues which had been set in motion ever since the appointment of Elphinstone as Envoy at Nagpur was now to carry them to the desired goal.

Raghuji Bhonsla had a son named Pursaji, commonly known as Bala Saheb. This prince was of weak intellect and incapable of managing his affairs. But he had a cousin, the celebrated Appa Saheb, who was a capable man and every one in Nagpur used to look upon him as the future successor of Raghuji. The English Resident also did the same and, therefore, even in the life-time of Raghuji, to win him over to the cause of the British Government, intrigued with him by showing him some undue favors. Appa Saheb had not been on good term with his uncle, who for some causes, the nature of which it is difficult to ascertain now, desired to deprive him of a portion of his estate which he had inherited from his father. There can be no question of the legality and validity of such a step on the part of Raghuji, for he was the independent sovereign of his kingdom and exercised unlimited power over the lives and properties of his subjects. But his nephew, Appa Saheb, appealed to the Resident to intercede on his behalf and prevent the Raja from accomplishing his desire. The Resident, of course, had no power to do so. Yet, setting all articles of the treaty at naught, he interested himself in the cause of Appa Saheb. We are told that his estate

"had been preserved to him, at last, by the aid of a remonstrance of the British Resident at Nagpur; and this circumstance not only produced an irreconcilable difference between the two princes, but induced Raghujee to have recourse to a series of measures, calculated to annoy and distress his nephew in every possible way."†

Thus was Appa Saheb won over to the side of the English and was therefore no doubt the centre of intrigues in Nagpur. However, when his uncle was on his death-bed, he was sent for and earnestly entreated, as a dying request, to look after the welfare of the principality. Raghuji placed the hand of his son within that of Appa Saheb and said that he made him the depository of the family honor.

On the death of Raghuji, owing to the incapacity of his son, a council of regency was

* *Ibid.*, p. 151.

† Prinsep's *History of the Political and Military Transactions in India*, Vol. I., p. 345.

formed, of which Appa Saheb was the head. No sooner was the news of Raghuji's death known than the Marquess of Hastings issued instructions to Mr. Jenkins to draw, by any means within his power, Appa Saheb into the net of the Subsidiary Alliance. He looked on the death of Raghuji as the long sought for opportunity to accomplish this object. Prinsep writes:

"The intrigues and passing occurrences of that court likewise promised equally to give the long-sought opportunity of establishing a subsidiary connection with the Nagpur State."

It is not necessary to enter into the labyrinth of these intrigues which, it is not unreasonable to suppose, was to a great extent the creation of the English to gain their end. How desirous the Governor-General was for the alliance and the advantages which he thought would be derived from it, is evident from what Prinsep has written in the work* referred to above.

Amidst all these intrigues, Pursaji was formally installed as Raja, and Appa Saheb was solemnly declared to be vested, by the Raja himself, with the sole and entire conduct of the public affairs. Prinsep writes that

"Mr. Jenkins was the first to offer his own congratulations and those of the government he represented, upon the auspicious commencement of the new reign."†

Well might Mr. Jenkins have done so, knowing how useful a tool Appa Saheb would prove in his hands. Prinsep has shown in his work§ the nature of the intrigues that reigned in Nagpur.

It was these intrigues which, it is said, induced Appa Saheb to seek the aid of the English. Mr. Jenkins was only too glad to embrace the opportunity to place the yoke of the subsidiary alliance on the neck of the Nagpur Chief. It was necessary to mature the conspiracy at dead of night. Accordingly it was done on the night of the 24th April.** How this nefarious business was transacted has been very well described by Prinsep in his *History of the Political and Military Transactions in India*, pages 358-368, Vol. I.

* See pages 340-341 and 350 and 351 of the History of Political and Military Transactions in India.

† *Ibid.*, p. 356.

§ Pages 357-358 of Vol. I.

** From the Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings, pp. 254 *et seq.*, Panini Office reprint:—
"June 1st [1816]. This day has brought to me the treaty of alliance by which Nagpore in fact ranges itself as a feudatory State under our protection. A singular contention of personal interests at the court of that country, resulting from the unexpected death of Raghujee Bhoosla, the late Rajah, has enabled me to effect that which has been fruitlessly labored at for the last twelve years. Though dexterity has been requisite, and money has removed obstructions, I can affirm, that the principles of my engagement are of the purest nature. Pursojee Bhoosla, only son of the late Rajah, suceeeded to the musnad without opposition. He is blind, and thence *used to remain* unseen in the palace so that in fact he was unknown. He was generally understood to be of weak capacity, but when his elevation gave people the opportunity of examining him, he was discovered to be literally an idiot. His cousin Appa Saheb, an active sensible man about twenty years of age, is presumptive heir to the musnad, Pursojee having no children. Through his natural pretension, and with as much of assent as the Rajah could comprehend and testify, Appa Saheb was called to the guidance of affairs as

The Subsidiary Alliance which Appa Saheb contracted with the then British Government was very unpopular with the nobles and people of Nagpur. Mr. Jenkins knew as much. As long as Pursaji was alive, there was a fear lest he should some day try to revoke the alliance. On the morning of the 1st February 1817, Pursaji was found dead in his bed, which suggested that violence had been used in causing his death. Of course, at that time Appa Saheb was not in Nagpur.*

Jenkins took no notice of all that the people were talking about it and even did not refer to it in his correspondence with the Governor-General. In his letter to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated 21st August, 1820, the Marquis of Hastings wrote :

"This letter stated the Resident's conviction, that the late Raja of Nagpore, 'Bala Sahib, had been murdered by order of Appa Sahib. The Court of Directors were referred, in the letter of the Governor-General in Council dated the 1st of October 1819, to the proofs by which this fact became satisfactorily established. I now allude to it because the circumstances which impressed Mr. Jenkins with the belief of this atrocity having been committed materially induced his resolution to arrest the Rajah. Mr. Jenkins's suspicions as to the fact had, indeed, been excited at the period of Bala Sahib's decease, but circumstances, which I need not recapitulate, having somewhat lessened them, and the difficulty of acquiring satisfactory proof being apparent, he did not deem it right to intimate, even to his own government, doubts which had been in a great degree dismissed from his own mind nearly as soon as they had been admitted."

Now, the above clearly leads to the suspicion that Jenkins was a party to the murder, (supposing the death of Bala Sahib was due to foul play), for he at that time

minister. Aware that there is a strong party against him in the palace, he feared that Pursojee might be made to adopt a son, which according to Mahratta institutions would cut out Appa Saheb. The latter had to apprehend that this would be a machination of Scindiah's with the women of the palace, and those apparent dependents who really guide them; and he foresaw that in such an event Scindiah would support the adopted child with troops, in order to acquire the rule over Nagpore.

"Under these impressions, Appa Saheb was not difficult to be worked upon. He is confirmed in his legitimate power, and he is ensured against the adoption by my professing to consider Pursojee incapable of the volition necessary to the act. This is most strictly true, for the poor Rajah has no will or wish beyond eating and sleeping. The security, therefore, to Appa Saheb is only simple justice. I believe the advantage of our having thus converted Nagpore from a very doubtful neighbour into a devoted friend is universally felt here; yet the whole extent of the gain will not be thoroughly computed. The arrangement enables me to leave unguarded above three hundred miles of frontier, for which I had difficulty to allot defence; it totally oversets the plan at which Scindiah has been secretly working for inducing the Peishwa to re-establish the Mahratta confederacy; it deprives Scindiah of troops and treasure, on which he calculated in all his hostile speculations; it gives to me, by the junction of Colonel Doveton's Corps with the Nagpore forces, an efficient army on the open flank of Scindiah's country; and it renders the interception of the Pindaries, should they venture another inroad into our southern territories, almost certain. I regard this event as giving me the fairest ground of confidence that I shall be able to achieve all I wish to effect for the Company's interest without any war. This rests on our presumption of the Peishwa's fidelity. If he be treacherous (and there is no answering for a Mahratta), we might have a struggle; but the consequence of such a contest could not now be doubtful, and it would only make the ultimate arrangement more beneficial to the Company."

* The circumstances which led to his leaving Nagpur have been narrated by Prinsep in his History, Vol. I, pages 421-426.

did nothing to investigate it, although by his own showing it was being freely whispered in Nagpur and that he failed in his duty in not reporting the matter to the Government of India; or that charging Appa Saheb with the murder was merely an after-thought made with some ulterior motives the nature of which it is not difficult to guess. As to the so-called proofs, it is notorious how easily evidence could be fabricated by a little manipulation on the part of the men in power against a fallen man. Truly did Macaulay write in his famous essay on Warren Hastings :

"They considered him a fallen man, and they acted after the kind some of our readers may have seen in India, a crowd of crows pecking a sick vulture to death. No bad type of what happens in that country, as often as fortune deserts one who had been great and dreaded. In an instant, all the sycophants who had lately been ready to lie for him, to forge for him, to pander for him, to poison for him, hastem to purchase the favor of his victorious enemies by accusing him. An Indian Government has only to let it be understood that it wishes a particular man to be ruined, and in twenty-four hours it will be furnished with grave charges supported by depositions so full and circumstantial, that any person unaccustomed to Asiatic mendacity, would regard them as decisive. It is well if the signature of the destined victim is not counterfeited at the foot of some illegal compact, and if some illegal paper is not slipped into a hiding place in the house."

Such being the case, the statement that Bala Saheb was murdered by his cousin Appa Saheb may be doubted. However, after Bala Saheb's death, Appa Saheb returned to Nagpur, but his attitude towards his British allies was much changed. The Subsidiary Alliance proved a galling yoke to his neck and he seemed to have bitterly repented the hour when he was lured into its snare.

"The conditions of the treaty were somewhat severe, and the amount of the subsidy exceeded a due proportion of the revenues of the country. The charge of the contingent was an addition to a burthen already too weighty for the State, and the Raja had some grounds for complaining of the costliness of his new friends."*

In a foot-note to the above passage it is added :

"The whole charge of the subsidy and contingent, amounted to between twenty and thirty lakhs a year, and was more than one-third of the whole revenue."

Thus Appa Saheb had good cause for his dissatisfaction with the greedy Company's servants. It is not unnatural, therefore, that the manner in which he was being ill-treated and bullied by his English friends made him determined to throw off their yoke.†

How the Raja was being subjected to petty annoyances may also be gathered from the following extracts from the letter of the Marquis of Hastings to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, dated 21st August, 1820. He wrote :

"We had, soon after his accession, much reason to be dissatisfied with his conduct, both as to his dismissal of the ministers, Nagoo Pundit and Narayan Pundit, who had been chiefly instrumental in bringing about the alliance and as to his continued negotiations with Bajee Rao. The latter, although they might not be pronounced positive indications of a hostile spirit, considering the Maratha habits of deception, were still direct infractions of the treaty. His entire failure in the organization and maintenance of his contingent on the footing which the treaty entitled us to expect and demand, and

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* Mill and Wilson, VIII, 186.

† The treatment which he was at this time receiving at the hands of Jenkins, has been described by Prinsep in his History, Vol. I, pp. 427-430.

his evident disregard, notwithstanding his professions to the contrary, of the Resident's repeated instances directed to that object constituted an equally important ground of complaint. . . .

"Although every exertion, in the form of advice and of kind admonition, was employed by the Resident to direct the attention of the Rajah to the true character of the conduct which he was pursuing, and to its unavoidable tendency to the destruction of the alliance from which he, and the state under his rule, has already so largely benefited, no impression seemed to have been made on him until the termination of the discussions at Poona, in June 1817. That event was calculated to have a salutary influence on his future views and procedures, and might have warned him of the peril to which he would expose himself and his government, should he permit himself to be allured by the fallacious project of a general combination against our power."*

It was, of course, necessary for the British Government of those days not to take into consideration the fact that their ally was not in a position to carry out all the conditions and provisions of the Treaty into which he had been betrayed by scheming and designing men in the pay of the Company. That Appa Saheb was anxious to do everything in his power to conciliate the British Government and not to offend them is evident trom the testimony of Malcolm, not an inexperienced diplomatist and certainly a better qualified man than Jenkins. In his dispatch, dated 9th October 1817, to the Governor-General, he wrote :

"Having received instructions from his Excellency Sir Thomas Hislop to proceed to Nagpore, for the purpose of obtaining information regarding the resources of the country and making such arrangements with the Resident and the local Government, as were necessary for the general objects of the public service, I left Hyderabad on the 4th of September; and reached Nagpore on the 23rd of that month : and during a stay of ten days every object that was in the contemplation of his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has, I hope, been accomplished . . . .It only remains, therefore, for me to state the general tenor of the Conference I had with the Raja, and the impression left upon my mind by his sentiments and conduct.

"The Raja came to a garden three miles from Nagpore to meet me and was very pointed in paying me every compliment that could mark the gratification he received from the visit, but as the meeting was one of ceremony, nothing particular passed. Two days after I paid my respects to him at his palace in the city, and after sitting some time in public durbar, he retired to another . room, accompanied by Mr. Jenkins, Ram Chander Waugh, and myself. He, upon this occasion, entered fully into a discussion of all points connected with the full performance of his engagements, and expressed himself very solicitous to deserve your Lordship's approbation by his efforts on the present occasion which, I stated to him, in the strongest manner, presented the most favorable opportunity for proving the sincerity of his professions. . . . . .

"The day after this interview I went with Mr. Jenkins to look at the contingent, of whom there were drawn up for inspection two thousand five hundred horse, and two thousand infantry. The horse were in appearance better than I had expected, several parties were very well mounted. The infantry, though an undisciplined rabble, are stout men, and may, even in their present state (if they are regularly paid), be found serviceable in the defence of posts and the guarding of passes over rivers and mountains.

"I paid my visit of leave on the 4th instant, the day I left Nagpore ; and though the Raja was in considerable distress on account of the dangerous illness of his favourite wife, he did not decline entering upon business. The minister being absent, he retired, unattended by anyone but Mr. Jenkins and myself, to a private room, where he took the opportunity of entering very fully into his conditon, and that of his country. He had, he observed, deliberately and advisedly abandoned all other connetions for that of the British Government. He knew, he said, his own stability and the

Papers respecting the Pindari and Maratha Wars, p. 423.

prosperity of his subjects depended upon his adherence to this policy, which nothing could ever make him change. He earnestly solicited me to impress this upon your Lordship's mind ; . . .

"I believe the Raja to be sincere in the professions he made to me at these conferences, but though satisfied that he at present harbours no unfriendly feelings to the alliance, and that any desire which the artifice of others might lead him to form for disobeying it, would be checked by his apprehensions of our power. I fear his inexperience, the intrigues of a divided court, and the actual condition of the state he rules, will prevent our receiving for some period that efficient aid from the resources of his country, which might, under a general view, be anticipated. The recent changes that have taken place in his ministers must have increased the violence of the different parties ; combinations will continue to be formed against the favorite of the day, and his disgrace will be sought through the usual means of misrepresenting and counteracting his measures. The Raja, though convinced of the necessity of an alliance with the British Government, has a natural jealousy of the progress of that to encroach upon his independence. This is the ground, therefore, which is taken by men who, covering their private feelings under the garb of patriotic spirit, desire to impress his mind with a belief that his minister is in reality our agent : and the caution this imposes upon the latter must create delays and obstructions to the public service that will often wear the appearance of indifference, if not of hostility. . . . .

"Besides all these causes, a degree of inertness appears to pervade every department of this government, which requires to be seen before it can be believed. We should not perhaps quarrel with a failing to which we, in a considerable degree, owe the incalculable advantages we have already derived from the connection ; and the inconveniences we now experience from this cause will, I am assured, be corrected, as far as it is possible they can be, by the unremitting efforts of the Resident, to whose knowledge and energy I look, with a hope that nothing else could inspire, for the gradual fulfilment of every object that your Lordship's foresight contemplated in the formation of this important alliance."

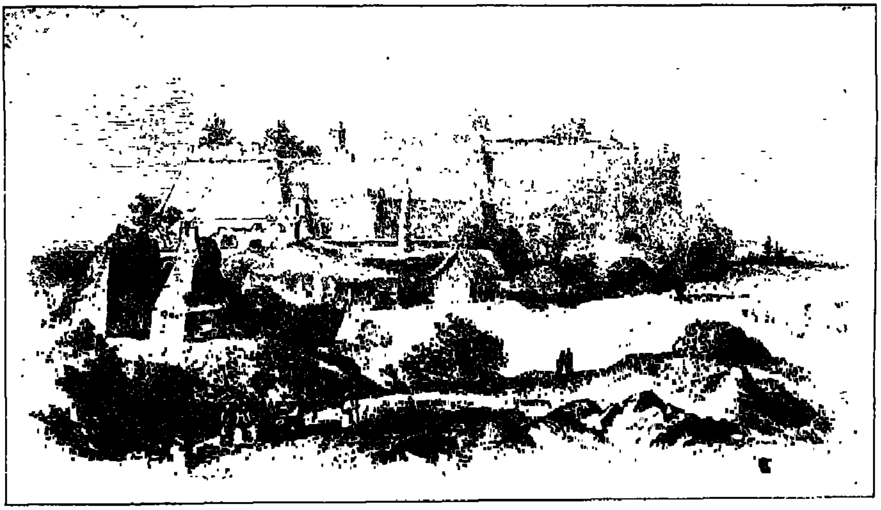
Malcolm's usual quickness of perception grasped the situation at once ; and had he, or a man of his type, been the political resident at Nagpur, matters would not have come to that pass which they did under the blundering policy of Jenkins, who as said before, resembled Elphinstone in almost every respect. Although the Raja always called him his brother, that resident never did any brotherly act to that unfortunate prince. Indeed, as the subsequent events show, he was bent upon his ruin.

The Peshwa Baji Rao, at this time, sent a *Khillut,* with the knowledge and approval of Elphinstone, to the Nagpur Raja. This *Khillut* arrived at Nagpur towards the middle of November, 1817. The Raja invited Jenkins to the ceremonial durbar that was to be held to invest him with the *Khillut.* But this he declined to do. He explained his conduct in a letter which he wrote to General Sir Thomas Hislop, dated the 24th November 1817[1] He wrote :

"Last night I received a note from Ramchunder Waugh, stating that a Khillut had arrived from the Peishwa for the Raja. This Khillut, he said, had been brought by Kundoo Pundit, the Raja's Vakeel lately dismissed by the Peishwa, under the treaty of Poona ; and that Mr. Elphinstone had been the means of procuring for the Raja this mark of distinction, that to-morrow as a lucky day was fixed for receiving it with due ceremonies, which consisted in the Raja going out in state to his camp with his Zuryputka, firing salutes, and remaining three days at the head of his troops. The Raia requested that either I would attend myself, or send some one on my part to be present at the ceremony and that I would also order a salute to be fired on the occasion : to this communication I replied, that when the Khillut in question left Poona, the Peishwa was still

Gangadhar Shastri

Appa Saheb Bhonsle



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on terms of amity with the British Government and His Highness, that what had since happened, which His Highness well knew, placed the Peishwa in the light of an enemy to both states; that under such circumstances the accepting of a Khillut from the Peishwa, in such a public manner, would have a very bad appearance; that I was convinced that the Governor-General would not receive a *Khillut* from the Peishwa under such circumstances, and certainly would not expect His Highness to do any such things; and having said this, I left the matter to his prudence, and a due sense of what might be the consequence. Notwithstanding this remonstrance, I received this morning a note from Ramchunder Waugh saying that the Raja intended to receive the *Khillut* in the manner before-mentioned, but that it ought not to raise any unpleasant feelings in my mind, as it had been sent through our channel, and could excite no enmity between the two states, as they are one.

"The Raja accordingly, having first received the *Khillut* in public durbar, and the nuzurs of all his chiefs and ministers, proceeded to his principal camp on the west side of the town, where he was received with uncommon demonstrations of pomp and show, and with every ceremony indicative of his having received the dignity of Senapati, or general-in-chief of the armies of the Mahratta Empire. On this *I have only to remark, that it is generally considerd as a demonstration* of the Raja's alliance with the Peishwa and his determination to follow the path already entered upon by Bajee Row."

It is not necessary to make lengthy comments on the above. Jenkins should not have tried to obstruct—nay, positively prohibit—a ceremonial occasion as the one which the Raja was going to celebrate. If he could not have joined in the ceremony, he should have kept quiet, instead of from that moment looking upon the Raja as his enemy. How devoted the Raja was to the British is evident from the letter from which extracts have been made above. Jenkins in continuation of his above-mentioned letter wrote:

"With regard to the project of attacking the British troops at this place, I have received continual communications since my Despatches of the 14th instant, to your Excellency and Sir J. Malcolm, describing the arguments which have been used to excite the Rajah to such a step, and the hitherto successful opposition of his more prudent advisers; but not a word indicative of any complaint against us, or any intention on the part of the Raja to break with us has appeared from any of his public communications: On the contrary, His Highness being alarmed a few nights ago by a false report, [doubtless fabricated by the warlike faction, that the British troops were moving out to attack him, sent for my Mahratta moonshee, and talked for an hour against the treachery of the Peishwa, and the impossibility of his following his example, whether his means were considered, his actual situation, living as he was with his family in an open town and without any fort of consequence, except Chanda, to place them in security; and above all, his gratitude towards the British Government, to whose favour and protection he owed everything, and should always desire to owe everything to it, and it alone."

But all these sincere professions and protestations of good will and friendship on the part of Appa Saheb, towards the British Government, had no effect on the Resident. Appa Saheb, if anything, was a fool and a timid man, and to consider him as capable of harbouring an scheme of war against the English is simply preposterous. However, it suited the interests of the Government of India at that time to treat him as an enemy.

H. H. Wilson's opinion that the alliance was not of much profit to Appa Saheb has already been quoted before. The Raja therefore naturally wanted that some

modifications should be made in the terms of the alliance which were pressing very heavily on him. The points which the Raja wanted to be adjusted were as follows:

"1st, Goojubhur be sent back to Nagpore; 2ndly, the contingent be not too nicely inspected; 3rdly, some arrangement be made to prevent the Raja's revenue suffering so much as it did by the remission of duties on grain, &c., for the use of our large armies; 4thly, our troops in the Raja's territory be reduced to the number fixed by treaty; 5thly, some consideration is shewn to the Raja's pecuniary necessities, which, from our demands and those of his own troops, almost reduced him to despair."

It cannot be said that these points did not require immediate adjustment. But Jenkins was of a different opinion. Although he had heard of these grievances before, yet he took no steps to redress them and he looked upon this public mention of them as 'a full admission of an hostile purpose.' For in his dispatch to the Governor-General dated the 26th November, 1817, he wrote:

"I had before received private overtures from Nagoo Pundit mentioning these as the Raja's grievances, and offering his services to accommodate everything, but this is the first public mention of these grievances, and is a full admission of an hostile purpose."*

At the same time Jenkins ordered the marching in of British troops to Nagpur. In concluding the above-mentioned dispatch, Jenkins wrote to the Governor-General:

"The detachment under Colonel Gahan has been ordered to march in, leaving its baggage: and it ought to arrive to-morrow night. Nothing but the Raja's entire submission and full security for the future, which can be a work I conceive neither of time nor of difficulty, ought now to cause any relaxation in the most active means to reduce him, and I hope that either his Excellency Sir Thomas Hislop or Brigadier-General Doveton will be shortly on their march."

The words of the above passage are specially commended to the notice of those who think that Appa Saheb forced the British to go to war with him. If anything, it was Jenkins who provoked the Nagpur chief to hostilities. It is not human nature to sit idle while one's enemies are busily engaged in making warlike preparations.

On the evening of the 26th November, 1817, the Raja's troops fired on the Residency but were repulsed. The news of the marching in of the British troops and the habitual contempt with which the Raja and his advisers and followers were treated by the Resident must have undoubtedly influenced the Raja's troops to commence hostilities. That the Raja himself did not instigate these hostilities is perfectly certain from his subsequent conduct.† His troops must have got out of hand and been incited

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* Papers relating to the War in India; presented to both House of Parliament, by command of the Prince Regent, Feb. 1819, page 70.

† Prinsep, in his 'History of the Political and Military Transactions in India' during the administration of the Marquess of Hastings, Vol. II, pp, 102-104, refers to his "decided pusillanimity," "extreme weakness and irresolution."

Is it not clear from the above, that Appa Saheb did not meditate any attack on the Residency or seriously think of going to war with the British? It is sheer nonsense to say that he betrayed 'extreme weakness and irresolution.' He knew the consequences that would result from attacking the Residency. Had he ordered the attack, it is not probable that he would have shown such want of common sense as not to have persisted in it and tried to cut off the advancing troops that were marching on Nagpur.

to this rash act by the Raja's enemies. We should not forget what Malcolm wrote to the Governor-General in his letter dated the 9th October, 1817, from which extracts have already been given before. He wrote:

"The recent changes that have taken place in his ministers must have increased the violence of the different parties; combinations will continue to be formed against the favorite of the day, and his disgrace will be sought through the usual means of misrepresenting and counteracting his measures."

When we take all these circumstances into consideration, it is highly probable that the Raja did not instigate the attack on the Residency. Even if he did, he should be exonerated from all blame, because he had been provoked by the warlike preparations of the Resident himself. The Marquess of Hastings, in the 43rd paragraph of his letter to the Secret Committee of the East India Company, wrote:

"His (Mr. Jenkins's) first step was ro secure the Residency from surprise, and to enable him to hold it and the adjacent hill until he could be joined by the troops from the the cantonment; a measure, the adoption of which, in the event of necessity, he had concerted with Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, the commanding officer."

Of course, it was the policy of the Resident to represent these as defensive measures. But these preparations combined with the news of the marching in of British troops wore quite a different complexion before the eyes of the people of Nagpur. No wonder, if under provocation, they struck the first blow, thinking that under these circumstances, the party which is first in the field has generally the better chance of success.

But their attack failed. This circumstance alone is sufficient to demonstrate the fact of the thorough preparation which Jenkins had made to receive the blow, or even to offer it, if necessary. H. H. Wilson may again be quoted to show the nature and extent of the Resident's preparation. He writes:

"The greater part of the Berar subsidiary force had already taken the field, and there remained within reach a detachment which had been posted at Ramket, about three miles distant, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, consisting of two battalions of Madras Sipahies, the first of the 20th and first of the 24th regiments of Native infantry: a detachment of European foot and of Native horse artillery, and three troops of the 6th Bengal Cavalry. These, upon the Resident's requisition, marched on the 25th, to the Residency grounds and were there joined by the escort, consisting of about four hundred men, with two guns, two companies of the Bengal infantry, and a few troopers of the Madras horse. On the morning of the 26th, they were placed in position on the Sitabaldi hills."*

Of course, the situation occupied by the Resident and his men was so strong and he had made preparations so very carefully that it was not possible for the Nagpur prince's troops to successfully take it by assault. The nature of the Resident's threatening position must have alarmed them and they, without carefully making the necessary

It is said that when he was made a prisoner, he confessed to having ordered the attack on the Residency. The alleged confession of Appa Saheb rests on the testimony of Jenkins himself and as such it is hardly worth much credit. Even assuming he confessed, does it not stand to reason, that this confession was extorted from him under threats and promises the nature of which need not be dilated upon here. Every 'schoolboy' in India knows how confessions are extorted by the police.

* *Loc. Cit.*, p. 188.

preparations on the evening of the 26th instant, opened fire on the Resident, with disastrous consequences to themselves.

As said before, the subsequent conduct of Appa Saheb showed that he had no intention of bringing about hostilities with the English. He sent a messenger to the Resident expressing his regret at what had happened, declaring that his troops had acted without his orders and that he was ready to abide by such terms as Jenkins proposed. Of course, the British troops were on their march to Nagpur, and this enabled the Resident to dictate very harsh and severe terms to his "brother" Appa Saheb. What these were may be better described in the words of the Marquess of Hastings:

"Immediately after the termination of the contest at Seetabuldee, the Raja sent a message to Mr. Jenkins, expressive of his concern for what had happened and his earnest desire to revert to his former relations of friendship with the British Government. Mr. Jenkins very properly replied to this overture, that the Raja's own proceedings had already placed the whole question beyond his discretion: that the future measures of the British Government would now be devised by higher authority than his; and that pending the receipt of my instructions as to what was to follow, all that he could do after having strenuously exerted himselt to avoid the occurrence of hostilities was to maintain the advantages already gained by our troops, until the reinforcements which he had called for should come in, and enable him to execute the commands of his Government. At the same time, he declined all further negotiations with the Raja, unless his troops were withdrawn from the positions which they then held to those which they had formerly occupied. This demand was complied with, and the Raja's forces were all withdrawn during the evening and night of the 27th of November."

The Raja's complying with the demand of the Resident immediately shows how desirous he was to try to bring about amicable relations with the British. But if treachery and perfidy are to be attributed to anybody, it is to the Resident. It was convenient and necessary for him to suspend hostilities and to gain time and not to have any regard for the Raja's feelings and meet his wishes. The Governor-General continues his letter as follows:

"Mr. Jenkins, in acceding to a cessation of hostilites, was chiefly influenced by the opinion of the commanding officer relative to the harassed condition of the troops after memorable exertions on the preceding days, and by the consideration of the near approach of the expected reinforcements, as well as of the additional reputation gained by granting it on the request of an enemy beaten by an inferior force: a circumstance calculated to inspire fresh confidence in our troops and the reverse in those of the Raja."

The poor Raja, in the simplicity of his heart, placed implicit confidence in the words of the Resident and acted as that officer asked him to do. To quote again from the Marquess of Hastings' letter:

"In answer to the Raja's reiterated professions of concern and desire of renewed friendship, Mr. Jenkins continued to plead his want of authority to decide as to future measures, and took occasion to intimate, that if the Raja left Nagpore, or if a single shot was fired, his throne was irretrievably lost, his only chance of preservation from ruin being unqualified submission.

"Early on the morning of the 29th a regiment of Native Cavalry with its Gallopers arrived; and on the same evening, a message and a note were sent to Mr. Jenkins by the Raja, in which after repeating his usual expressions of contrition and reliance on our indulgence, he signified his intention of disbanding the greater part of his troops, in the hope that the treaty would be allowed to remain in force, and his former requests, noticed in a preceding paragraph, be satisfactorily adjusted.

To this communication was added a solicitation, that our troops marching upon Nagpore might be ordered to halt. Mr. Jenkins was again compelled to go over the the same ground of reply which he had already taken and to point out how little dependence could be placed on the Raja's assurances, consequently how essentially vital it was to the British interests, not to neglect every practicable means of security ; and also to repeat, that the Rajas's own acts had already placed all future procedures with regard to him beyond the reach of his (Mr. Jenkin's) authority . . . ."

The Raja was in the habit of hearing the Europeans boasting of their religion being one of peace, meekness and forgiveness and of their Divine Founder enjoining His followers to turn the left cheek to those who smote on the right. Acting on that belief he implored the Resident for mercy, but that officer knew not what mercy meant; he showed marked rudeness towards that prince. The Marquess of Hastings wrote :

"From this time up to the 2nd of December' on the evening of which the Rajah returned to his palace, messages of the same character were repeatedly brought ; . . .

"On the 5th of December our troops at Nagpore were reinforced by a detachment of the Nizam's Regular Infantry and Reformed Horse under Major Pitman, and on the 12th, Brigadier-General Doveton arrived with his cavalry and light troops : the remainder of his division marched in on the following day. .

"............Mr. Jenkins and Brigadier-General Doveton, in the absence of my instructions, which had not yet reached Nagpore, and the uncertainty of the period which might elapse before their arrival, resolved to bring matters to a termination. On the 14th, terms were offered to the Raja for his acceptance; on his refusal to comply with which, before daybreak on the 16th, it was determined immediately to follow up by a general attack on the positions of his troops.

"The terms offered were, in substance, the following: That the Raja should acknowledge that his recent attack on our troops had placed his whole state at our mercy, and that his only hope was in our forbearance and moderation ; that his whole ordnance and warlike stores should be delivered up to us, a portion of them eventually to be restored on fixing the military establishments of the state ; that he should disband, in concert with the Resident, his Arabs and other troops, as soon as practicable ; that his army should immediately move to a position to be assigned for it ; that the city of Nagpore should be evacuated and occupied by our troops, public and private property being protected, the Raja's civil authorities remaining in the exercise of their functions on his behalf and the city being restored on the conclusion of a treaty ; that the Raja should repair to the British Residency or camp, and reside there until everything should be settled : that the terms granted should not go to deprive him of any considerable portion of territory, beyond what might be necessary for the payment of the subsidy and the efficient maintenance of the contingent as fixed by the former treaty,......: and that if the terms should be complied with by four o'clock on the morning of the 16th, the latest period allowed for an answer, the Raja's army should be withdrawn from their positions in and about the city, and the city occupied by British troops at seven o'clock on the same morning, the Raja himself being at liberty to come in, either, before the execution of the terms or afterwards in the course of the day, as might be most agreeable."

The terms were no doubt most humiliating to the Raja. But that prince was a timid man and a great fool besides, for he reposed confidence in the so-called good intentions of his allies. It is therefore to be surmised, that he accepted all the terms which were dictated to him. But his troops were not composed of men who like him were cowards. Moreover, they would not knowingly agree to their extinction. They resolved to make a stand and tried to prevent the Raja from going over to the British. To quote again from the Marquess of Hastings' dispatch :

"The next morning, at six o'clock, a message was received at the Residency, that the Arabs

would not allow the Raja to come in, and that it would take some time to give up the guns, but that all would be settled in two or three days. On this Mr. Jenkins, in communication with Brigadier-General Doveton, the troops in the meanwhile being drawn out in battle order, gave the Raja time until nine o'clock to come in, intimating that if he did so, more time might be allowed for executing the other conditions, but that if he demurred, the troops would immediately move on to the attack. A little before nine the Raja accordingly arrived at the Residency,........"

But his troops were not to be so easily coerced by the harsh terms of the Resident and they defied the orders of the Nagpur Raja to encompass their own ruin. That the Raja could not be charged with the faults of his troops every sensible man would admit. Even H. H. Wilson, who, as a thoroughbred Anglo-Indian, had very little sympathy with the Indian princes, writes :

"The disregard apparently shown to the orders of the Raja might have been preconcerted; but it not improbably arose from the headstrong wilfulness of individual leaders, and was characteristic of the relaxation of authority which prevailed generally in the Maratha armies."*

Now ensued another battle, the main object of which was to crush the Raja's troops. To quote again from the Marquess of Hastings' dispatch:

"The next delay took place in the surrender of the guns, and the removal of the Raja's troops to the positions fixed for them. For these purposes the period allowed was extended until twelve o'clock; but on our troops proceeding at that hour to take charge of the guns, the heads of the columns were fired on by troops posted in an enclosed garden, and subsequently from several batteries in the front of Brigadier-General Doveton's lines. Our troops were immediately disposed for the attack, and the action commenced,......"

Of course, the Raja's troops without proper leaders and equipment were merely a rabble, and therefore it was no difficult task to defeat them. Although worsted, they yet did not leave Nagpur. The Marquess of Hastings writes:

"The 17th and 18th of December, the days following the action, were given to the Raja to prevail on the Arabs to evacuate the city; but although their arrears had been paid by the Raja, and every security offered on the part of the British Government for their march out of the territories of Nagpur, the evacuation was not effected. It thence became necessary for Brigadier-General Doveton to commence military operations against that part of the city where they were posted, and in order to increase his means, the place being strong, instructions were immediately issued for the march of his battering train from Akolah. Mun Bhub, one of the principal leaders of the War-party, with the other chiefs whom Brigadier-General Doveton had just defeated, were said to be with them and to be urgent in encouraging them to resist. The Raja's horse remained scattered in every direction with the exception of a considerable body collected at Ramteg; but although they had plundered some of our cattle bringing in grain, they had not ventured to interfere with our operations."

Of course, these gallant Arabs, although defeated, with bulldog-like pertinacity stuck to their posts, and were not to be so easily persuaded to give up resisting the British troops, on whom they once at least succeeded in inflicting heavy losses. The Marquess of Hastings continues in his dispatch:

"The efforts of the troops under Brigadier-General Doveton were still directed to the dislodgement of the Arabs from the palace, on the gates of which an unsuccessful assault was made on the 24th of December, in which our troops suffered considerable loss, although the gallantry

* *Loc. Cit.*, p. 197.

and steadiness of both officers and men were on that occasion eminently conspicuous....... Notwithstanding the failure in the immediate object of the attack, such an impression was created by it that the Arabs soon signified their willingness to evacuate on conditions and on Brigadier-General Doveton's agreeing to the proposed terms, they marched out of the city on the morning of the 30th. It was occupied by the British troops on the noon of the same day. No formal articles of capitulation were executed, the Arabs only asking for their personal safety, and a British officer with a small escort, to give them and their families a safe conduct to Mulcapore. It being anxiously desired that the city should be secured against hazard of destruction, and it being considered of importance to obtain possession of it as soon as possible, their request was granted......

"On the occupation of Nagpore by the British troops, many of the principal people came in to the Residency, and proclamations, in the name of the Raja and the Resident, were issued throughout the country in order to promote tranquillity."

Jenkins now gained all his desired objects and it was expected that he would fulfil the promises he had held out to the Raja when he asked him to come over to the Residency and become a prisoner of the British. As said before, the Raja was given to understand

"that the terms granted should not go to deprive him of any considerable portion of territory, beyond what might be necessary for the payment of the subsidy, and the efficient maintenance of the contingent, as fixed by the former treaty, all other changes being directed solely to the preservation of tranquillity, with a due regard to the respectability of the Raja's government."

When the Raja entered into subsidiary alliance with the British Government, he was required to pay the subsidy in money and not in the cession of any territory, and it has been also pointed out before that the payment of the subsidy cost him about one-third of the gross revenue of his principality. It was on these grounds, he had asked the British Government to make some modifications in the original terms of the treaty of the subsidiary alliance. But then broke out the hostilities, and when the Raja was prevailed upon to go to the British Camp as a prisoner, he understood, as it was quite natural for a man in his situation to do, that his allies would be convinced of his innocence and would treat him with that generosity which he deserved. It was therefore that he readily accepted the terms profferred by Jenkins.

In his letter to the Marquess of Hastings dated the 9th October 1817, from which extracts have already been given before, Malcolm wrote that the Raja "always called" Jenkins "his brother", and that his "Lordship stood in the relation of a father." But neither "his brother" nor "a father" was going to behave towards him as such.

The Marquess of Hastings wanted the deposition of the Raja, and the Resident knowing the mind of his chief, was, to use a mild expression, guilty of a flagrant breach of faith : for the terms which he now offered to the Raja to conclude the treaty with the British were not the same on the distinct understanding of which the Raja had come over as a prisoner to the Residency. To quote the words of the Marquess of Hastings :

"Immediately after the quiet occupation of the city of Nagpore by the British troops, Mr. Jenkins contemplated the return of Appa Sahib to his palace, and had prepared the draft of a definitive treaty to be signed previously to the Raja's quitting the Residency..................But in the mean time, my original instructions, framed on my being informed of the attack on the Residency,

reached him, and he thus, for the first time, became apprized of my decided reluctance to the restoration of Appa Sahib to power on any conditions. He accordinly desisted from proceeding to the signature of the treaty ; but as the return of Appa Sahib to the palace, and his eventual restoration to the throne, had been virtually promised, he judged himself bound to carry that measure into effect, subject to confirmation or annulment from me, and substituted for the treaty a provisional engagement, according to which the Raja was, until my further orders could be known, to retain the throne on the following conditions : That he should cede all his territories to the northward of the Nerbudda, as well as certain possessions on the southern bank, and all his rights in Berar, Gawilgurh, Sirgoojah and Jushpore in lieu of the former subsidy and contingent ; that the civil and military affairs of the government should be settled and conducted by ministers in the confidence of the British government, according to the advice of the resident ; that the Raja, with his family, should reside in the palace at Nagpore, under the protection of British troops ; that the arrears of the subsidy should be paid up and the subsidy itself should continue to be paid, until the final transfer of the above-mentioned territories had taken place ; that any forts in his territory which we might wish to occupy should immediately be given up ; that the persons whom he described as principally concerned in resisting his orders should receive no favour, but be declaredly cast off by him, and if possible, be seized and delivered to the officers of the British Government ; and that the two hills of Seetabuldee with the bazars, and an adequate portion of land adjoining should be ceded to the British Government, which should be at liberty to erect on them such military works as might be deemed necessary."

There was no other alternative for the Raja than to put up with these disgraceful terms as best as he could. The Governor-General writes :

"These conditions having been accepted by the Raja, he returned to his palace on the 9th of January, both that and the city being still garrisoned by our troops."

Henceforth the Raja had no shadow or semblance of independence. His lot was a very pitiable one and it was abuse of authority and language to charge him with treasonable designs or perfidious conduct. He had not the power to be guilty of these things, for not only were his resources crippled, but he was virtually a prisoner in the hands of the British in his own capital. But since the Governor-General wanted to depose him, there was no difficulty in trumping up false charges against him. Let us again quote the words of the Governor-General whom Appa Saheb had looked upon "in the relation of a father to him." The Marquess of Hastings wrote:

"My determination to remove him from power was founded alike on the horror and disgust excited by his atrocious perfidy, on the conviction of its being impossible ever to repose confidence on one so destitute of principle and on my conception of the importance of holding up to India, as an example, the signal chastisement of so remarkable an instance of political depravity."

Such were the sentiments of the Governor-General towards Appa Saheb. Although he acquiesced in the arrangement which Jenkins had provisionally entered into with Appa Saheb, yet from the tenor of his dispatches from the passages which have been already quoted above, it is evident that he would have been extremely glad at the deposition of Appa Saheb. Jenkins seeing which side the wind was blowing, did everything in his power to please his chief. He accused the Raja of several charges the nature of which will be presently mentioned.

The new terms which were imposed on the Raja, were very galling and humiliating and the slender resources left to him were such as he could hardly maintain his dignity

with as a reigning prince, so that he was obliged to propose to the Resident the cession of his principality in lieu of a pension. The Governor-General writes:

"It is proper to notice in this place a proposal made by Appa Sahib to Mr. Jenkins, for transferring to the British Government, on certain conditions, the whole of the possessions of the State of Nagpore, himself retaining the name and form of sovereignty alone; and receiving a stipulated share of the revenues. This project he wished to substitute, instead of completing the arrangements detailed in the draft of the proposed definitive treaty which would have left in the hands of the Rajah, under prescribed limitations, the administration of the territories to the State of Nagpore."

But this arrangement did not suit the Government of India; because they knew that the revenues of the Nagpur State would not be sufficient to meet the charges which they had imposed on that prince in the shape of the subsidiary alliance and civil and military administration and then to pay the Raja a pension which would enable him to maintain his dignity and respectability. Accordingly, the Raja's proposal was declined. The Governor-General wrote to the Secret Committee of the East India Company:

"After my giving most deliberate attention to the plan suggested by the Rajah, it seemed to me that your financial interests would be better consulted by adhering to the arrangement originally contemplated. Excluding from the calculation, on both sides of the question, that portion of our military expenditure which, under any plan, would be incurred for the defence of the country and the support of the new order of things, I was of opinion that it would be more beneficial to us to obtain possession of a territory yielding a revenue of twenty lacs of rupees annualy, unburthened by any other charge than that of the requisite civil establishments, than to undertake the management of a country producing annually sixty lacs of rupees, encumbered with provisions for the Rajah, his family, and the principal officers of his Government, as well as with the debts of the Rajah. The large establishments, moreover, which it would be necessary for us to maintain, from the nature of a considerable portion of the territory, and its distance from the seat of our Government, might be found much out of proportion to the pecuniary value of the possession."

It cannot be denied that the Raja consulted the interests of his subjects when he proposed to the British Government to take his territory and give him a pension. But it would not have paid the British Government to have done so. The Governor-General's own words, quoted above, conclusively prove that the Raja was called upon to make such payments to the British Government as his exchequer did not and could not allow him to do. But the demands of the Government were to be met by the Raja anyhow. Had his proposal been acceded to, then the door of the future aggrandisement on his territory by the Government would have been closed. His very inability to pay their exorbitant demands was serving as a pretext to the British Government to hold him up as their faithless ally and to practise all sorts of refined brutality on him at their sweet will and convenience and to deprive him of his rights and privileges to suit their own interests.

The Raja's proposal then was not given that careful consideration which its importance demanded. It was dismissed altogether by the Governor-General. The promised treaty with the Raja was not concluded. Jenkins said that he had discovered treasonable desions on the part of the Raja, who was therefore to be punished with

deposition and imprisonment. To quote again from the Marquess of Hastings' despatch:

"Before, as I have already stated, the despatch which was to make known to Mr. Jenkins my sentiments and instructions could be prepared, a second revolution at Nagpore was on the eve of its accomplishment. To avert the danger which it menaced to our interests, it became indispensable that Mr. Jenkins should abandon the course then contemplated, and should, without reference to my authority, resort to measures of vigour and severity, which the unanticipated crisis rendered imperative.

"Mr. Jenkins's suspicions of the renewed machinations of Appa Sahib against the British Government were first most strongly excited by the resistance of the Killadars of Chouragurh and Mundela, notwithstanding public orders which they had received for the delivery of those fortresses to the officers of our government and by Major Roughsedge's reports of unfriendly conduct manifested by the Rajah's subedar of Ruttonpore . . . ; but here it is only necessary to observe, that it seemed improbable the garrisons of either of the former places would have held out against the offer which had been made of paying their arrears, unless their resistance had been dictated by superior authority. In fact, the Killadar of Chouragurh himself declared, that he had secret orders contravening his public instructions and the truth of the assertion was supported by information derived by Mr. Jenkins from other quarters. With regard to Mundela, Mr. Jenkins's suspicions of the same process of intrigue being in existence were confirmed by his intercepting a letter from the Killadar's agent to his master, in which allusion was made to his secret orders.

"In addition to these circumstances, Mr. Jenkins received frequent reports of an intercourse by letters being kept up with Bajee Rao and Gunput Rao, and of secret conferences of the Rajah with Nagoo Pundit and Ram Chunder Waugh, the mischievous purposes of which were to be inferred from the exclusion of Narayan Pundit, against whom the Rajah showed much discontent. He complained of that minister's having persuaded him to come into the Residency and it was evident he thought that had he held out he could at least have secured better terms. The rumours of his meditating an escape were very general and it was perfectly understood that one of the disaffected chiefs had received a sum of money for the levy of troops......On the whole, Mr. Jenkins looked on the combination of circumstances as affording little short of positive proof of the guilt of Appa Saheb and his associates, and his only hesitation in removing the Rajah from the throne arose from a just conception that such a measure must be irrevocable if once undertaken. He consequently hastened to apprize me of the state of affairs, requesting my early instructions. Mr. Jenkins, however, at the same time very properly determined to secure the Rajah's person, if before receiving my instructions he should judge the probability of Appa Saheb's escaping to require such a step.

"The restoration of Appa Saheb to the throne seemed to me to render his subsequent removal a measure of considerable awkwardness : and I feel it to be indispensable, that its adoption should be supported, not merely by evidence sufficient for my own moral conviction of his renewed intrigues and designs against us, but such as should satisfy the superior authorities in England, as well as the public mind, that there was an absolute necessity for displacing him. In the event of such evidence being obtained, or of Appa Sahib's attempting to escape from Nagpore, which might be looked on as a distinct proof of treacherous intention, I could have no hesitation in sanctioning his arrest and conveyance to the nearest place of strength within your provinces; but the circumstances detailed by Mr. Jenkins,.........did not, in my judgment, amount to such proof as would justify so decisive a course of proceeding. It was, however, sufficiently strong against Nagoo Pundit and Ram Chunder Waugh, to warrant and require their removal from the territorry of Nagpore, a step which I accordingly authorized. In ordering instructions to this effect to be conveyed to Mr. Jenkins, I also directed every precaution to be taken to prevent the Rajah's escape, without giving him alarm for his personal freedom, and to secure the tranquil and peaceable administration of the country. Within a few days after those instructions had been despatched, a further letter was received by

Mr. Adam from Mr. Jenkins, which apprized me of the actual seizure of the Rajah and his confidential minister in consequence of the additional and incontestable proofs of their treachery which had come to Mr. Jenkins' knowledge. This letter stated the Resident's conviction that the Rajah of Nagpore, Bala Sahib, had been murdered by order of Appa Sahib......The circumstances which impressed Mr. Jenkins with the belief of this atrocity having been committed, materially induced his resolution to arrest the Rajah...Two cases consequently required his deliberate consideration. It seemed doubtful in the event of Appa Sahib's being condemned on what Mr. Jenkins had already brought forward to prove his unworthiness, whether it would be proper to try him for the murder of his kinsman and sovereign, though that prince had been under our special protection : and it was still more so whether, supposing the previous circumstances to be deemed inconclusive, the other enquiry should be prosecuted. In the first case there was less difficulty, as Appa Sahib would then cease, even nominally, to be a sovereign. It appeared, however, that for our reputation, we could not go on stronger grounds in deposing him than those of such a murder. The proofs for conviction were easily producible, should the casé be tried ; but considerable difficulty presented itself with regard to the situation of the Rajah pending the enquiry. It was to be feared, that were he at liberty he would endeavour to escape, whether guilty or not. If innocent, he would be disposed to think that the British Government had resolved to degrade, if not to depose him, and he would hardly expect a fair trial ; if guilty, there could be no doubt of his flying. At any rate, therefore, it appeared to Mr. Jenkins necessary to secure his person before his trial, should such an investigation be deemed expedient. The trial of the Rajah's instruments would have imposed the same necessity.

"Under all circumstances, and particularly with advertence to his apprehension of escape, grounded on the knowledge of the Rajah and his advisers having become greatly alarmed at the enquiries already set on foot regarding his intrigues, which it was impossible altogether to keep secret, Mr. Jenkins determined to take the decisive step of removing him from the place and bringing him to the Residency, where he was merely, to be told that he was suspected of treachery, and that his fate would depend on the orders which further discoveries on the point might produce from me. Every suitable precaution was taken by Mr. Jenkins to prevent commotion, and on the 15th of March Appa Sahib was conveyed to the Residency. Nagoo Pundit and Ram Chunder were at the same time arrested."

The extract given above from the Governor-General's despatch is a long one, but it was necessary to do so, to show the charges against the Raja and the nature of the evidence by which those charges were to be substantiated. That the so-called intrigues of the Raja against the British Government did not deserve much credit is evident even from the Governor-General's own showing. He wrote:

"But the circumstances detailed by Mr. Jenkins ...... did not, in my judgment, amount to such proof as would justify so decisive a course of proceeding."

It is only necessary, therefore, to say that those charges could not be proved against the Raja.

Jenkins knew as much and therefore he brought a fresh charge against that unfortunate sovereign. He charged him with having murdered his cousin. A good deal has been said above to show the worthlessness of this charge. It was an after-thought on the part of Jenkins to accuse the Raja of such a heinous crime in order to get the object so dear to his heart accomplished. Even assuming, for the sake of argument, that the Raja committed the murder, the Resident or for the matter of that the British Government had no authority to try or punish him for that crime. At the time of the committal of that crime, the Nagpur

State was in alliance with, and not dependent upon, the British Government. And as such the Resident had no jurisdiction to try the Raja.

It should also be remembered that the Raja was never given an opportunity to know the nature of the charges, and the evidence by which those could be substantiated. He was made a prisoner and was going to be condemned unheard. Even the farce of a trial was denied to the Bhonsla Raja, whom to make a prisoner in the Residency, it is not improbable that Jenkins had recourse to treachery.

After the imprisonment of the Raja, evidence flowed in from all the quarters of the globe, as it were, to incriminate him. Intelligence was alleged to have been received, "through Mr. Elphinstone, from Bajee Rao's camp, of a letter having reached the Peishwah from Appa Sahib, written in his own hand, explaining his circumstances and proposing a combined movement." Only credulous persons and dishonest diplomats could pin their faith on the truth of such intelligence. But every rumour, every story, however absurd, against the Raja, was to be eagerly swallowed as gospel-truth when it served the purpose of the Company's servants to do so. Appa Saheb, who had been reduced to a position of perfect impotency, was totally incapable of all those designs of which he was suspected.

As regards the allegation that the Killadars of Chouragarh and Mundela offered resistence to the British troops because they had been secretly dictated to do so by some higher authority, there is hardly any evidence worthy of credit to prove it. It is said that the Killadars on their trial justified their conduct as they had secret orders from the Raja to do so. The Raja was made a prisoner on the 15th March and the trial of this Killadar of Mundela took place about a month after that date. Knowing that the Raja was a prisoner in the hands of the British, and also that he was in disgrace and that it was the intention of the British Government to depose him, no one having the least particle of common sense in him would doubt that the Killadar said what he knew would not only lead to his acquittal but would immensely please his victors. And he was not wrong in his surmises.

As said before, Appa Saheb was not given any opportunity to say anything in his defence. He was not tried for the crimes with which he was charged. He was condemned unheard by one whom he had looked upon as standing "in the relation of a father to him" and by another whom he "always called his brother." It was decided that he should be kept a state prisoner in the fort of Allahabad, and the infant grandson of the late Raghuji Bhonsla was to be placed on the *masnad* of Nagpur. This arrangement suited the convenience of the British Government, for during the long minority of the new Raja, the affairs of the Nagpur State were to be managed by the Resident.

The treaty of subsidiary alliance then with the Nagpur State was extremely beneficial to the Government of India :—it enabled them to be masters of nearly half of the territory of that principality and that, too, of a very fertile tract of it. The Governor-General wrote :

"The province of Garrah Mundelah, of which Jubbulpore is the principal town, and Sohagpore to the north of the Nerbudda, as well as the adjacent districts of Hoosingabad, Seonee, Chupara,

and Gurrawarah, to the south of that river, formed the chief part of the territory proposed to be ceded to the British Government, according to the preliminary engagement concluded by Mr. Jenkins with Appa Sahib."

The gross revenue of the Nagpur State amounted to about sixty lacs, but that of the proposed cessions was not less than 28 lacs. The Governor-General wrote:

"You will observe that the gross revenue of the cessions fixed by the provisional engagement amounts to nearly twenty-eight lacs of rupees, while the net revenue is calculated at about twenty-two and a half lacs annually."

No wonder that Appa Saheb was desirous of giving up the whole of the Nagpur State to the British and of being content to live on a pension from them.

The subsequent events in the life of Appa Saheb, after he was sent as a prisoner to be confined in Allahabad fort, need not detain us long. He was not destined to be an inmate of that fort. He had experieneed treachery and perfidy in the conduct of his allies, in whom he had reposed implicit confidence. How bitterly in his after-life he repented the day or rather the midnight hour, when he concluded the treaty of subsidiary alliance with the British Government, an alliance which brought nothing but misfortune to him and ruin to the fertile principality of Nagpur!

Had Appa Saheb been acquainted with the English language, he would have no doubt credited Burke with prophetic vision into the future, so far at least as the behaviour of the British Government related to him. In the course of his speech on the 1st December 1783, on the motion for going into committee on Fox's India Bill, Burke said:

"With regard, therefore, to the abuse of the external federal trust, I engage myself to you to make good these three positions: First, I say, that from Mount Imaus ... where it touches us in the latitude of twenty-nine, to Cape Comorin in the latitude of eight, that there is not a single prince, state, or potentate, great or small, in India with whom they have come into contact, whom they have not sold. I say sold, though sometimes they have not been able to deliver according to their bargain. Secondly, I say that there is not a single treaty they have ever made which they have not broken. Thirdly, I say that *there is not a single prince or state who ever put any trust in the Company who is not utterly ruined*; and that none are in any degree secure or flourishing but in the exact proportion to their settled distrust and irreconcilable enmity to this nation.

"These assertions are universal: I say, in the full sense universal. They regard the external and political trust only, but I shall produce others fully equivalent in the internal."

From his own experience of the treatment he had received at the hands of the British, he must have also formed the same opinion which was so eloquently given expression to by Burke long before he had attained his state of manhood. No wonder that he tried to escape from the bondage imposed upon him by the British.

And escape he did. The manner in which he eluded the vigilance of the escort which was carrying him a prisoner to Allahabad reads more like a romance than a real incident. The escape of Appa Saheb, being pursued by the troops led by European officers, his finding an asylum in the Courts of some of the ruling princes of those days in India, his wandering as a *fakeer*, ought to serve as meet subjects for some talented poet, dramatist or novelist to exercise his pen. Regarding the escape of Appa Saheb, the Marquess of Hastings wrote:

"I deeply regretted the escape of Appa Sahib on account of its tendency to keep unsettled the minds of a portion of the inhabitants of the country; but from all the information that I had obtained,

I was satisfied that his personal qualities and character were not calculated to render him dangerous, and the contempt into which he had sunk had stripped his name of the influence which often attends that of a prince in a similarly fallen condition. I foresay that even should he, after emerging from the fastnesses where he remained comparatively secure from our attack, continue to elude the efforts for his recapture, he would soon be reduced to the situation of a powerless unregarded fugitive, totally deprived of means to injure our interests."

The Marquess of Hastings, nevertheless, had taken great pains to recapture him but totally failed in his attempts. Had there been at that time in India any powerful and independent native sovereign, Appa Saheb's fate would have enlisted his sympathy, and the Governor-General would not then have been able to write regarding him in the manner in which he did in the extract given above.

Appa Saheb, as said before, was brought a prisoner to the Residency on the 15th March, 1818. Jenkins, without giving him an opportunity to say what he had to say in his defence, or even waiting for further instructions from the Governor-General, wrote on the 17th March (*i. e.,* two days after his making the Raja a prisoner) a despatch which was received at three o'clock A. M., on the 20th March, at Jubbulpur, in which he said:

"I have now, from many proofs of intrigues, found it necessary to seize the person of the Rajah, and I shall send him immediately by Jubbulpore to Lord Hastings. He will have four companies of the Twenty-second and a squadron of cavalry; and I must trouble you to relieve the squardon with one of your regiment from Chupra or Dhooma. By the time His Highness reaches Bellary or Lohargong, I fancy his destination will be pointed out by Lord Hastings. As it is of consequence to send the Rajah off soon, I have no time to write for other reliefs, but probably you will know where to write to get your squadorn relieved."

The destination of the Raja, as said before, was the Allahabad fort. But he escaped from the camp of Rachuri. To quote from the Marquess of Hastings' letter of the 17th October, 1822:

"He (the Rajah) went off in the dress of a sepoy between two and three o'clock in the morning, accompanied by six sepoys of the Twenty-second regiment who had been on guard over him, and had been debauched to aid his flight......The ex-Rajah had three horsemen with him.

"A reward for the apprehension of Appa Sahib was immediately proclaimed by the Commissioner; ......

"It appears that Appa Sahib reached Hurrey, a hill fort south of Chouragurh, on the night of the 14th : but that he speedily continued his course to Buthurgurh, where there was a force of his adherents collected, obviously on the contemplation of his escape, amounting to about a thousand well-armed men. At this post, however, he made but a short halt, proceeding to join the Gonds in the Mahadeo hills. Those clans of mountaineers, it would seem, had been prepared to expect him. The new Rajah of Nagpore had by this time been seated on the guddee : but although his elevation was generally hailed with satisfaction by the population of the country, a strong party was understood to be confederated in the city for the cause of Appa Sahib. Subsequent intelligence was received that the ex-Rajah, supported by the Gonds, had taken possession of the fort of Chouragurh, not finding resistance offered by the handful of men who garrisoned it : also, that he had a vakeel at Boorhampore entertaining Arab soldiery, which could not have taken place but by the connivance of Sindia's Governor of that city.

"Shortly after Sir John Malcolm reported that one Sheo Persaud, a man of family in the Nagpore State, but latterly serving with Bajee Rao, communicated to him the disposition of Appa Sahib to surrender himself, if Sir John Malcolm would pledge his word for Appa Sahib's security against

imprisonment or indignity, and would obtain for him wherewithal to maintain himself decently in retirement. This was represented on the faith of a confidential servant despatched by Appa Sahib to engage Sheo Persaud's undertaking the negotiation. Sir John Malcom added that he had referred the matter to Mr. Jenkins. Government immediately apprized Sir John Malcolm that it would plight the assurance solicited, would allow an income to support Appa Sahib decorously as a private individual of rank, and would promise him all becoming attentions, if he would take up his residence within the Company's provinces. As reference had been made to Mr. Jenkins, that gentleman was informed of this determination on the part of Government; and he was instructed to intimate,...... ..that a lac of rupees was the annual allowance which Government would fix for Appa Sahib in the event of his submission.

"These overtures were clearly made by Appa Sahib with a view of ensuring an eventual resource, should he fail in the intrigues which he was at the same time actively prosecuting.........

"In the meantime the Resident at Nagpore had communicated his having detected a correspondence maintained between Appa Sahib and his connexions by marriage residing in that city. They were working indefatigably to enrol and organize bodies of armed adherents in the interior, while they supplied Appa Sahib with money for the collection and payment of troops on the frontier.........

"The machinations of Appa Sahib were indeed carried to a wide extent. His designs to raise the province of Chutteesgurh into insurrection were timely discovered and frustrated : similar detection attended his underhand endeavours to excite hostile disposition in Raja Keerut Sing and other chieftains, against the British Government. His correspondence with Sirdars in the Bhopaul service was at the same time discovered; and Sir John Malcolm reported that Amrut Rao Pandit was employed at Oojein in various intrigues for Appa Sahib.........

"......Towards the latter end of October, Lieutenant-Colonel Adams projected a combined irruption of different columns into the Mahadeo hills, for the purpose of surrounding Appa Sahib, and he moved accordingly. The situation of the ex-Rajah became more critical: therefore he fled from the hills, escorted by a body of horse under Cheetoo Pindarry, to avail himself......of repeated invitations from Jeswant Rao Lar for Appa Sahib's taking refuge in Asseergurh, should he be doubtful of maintaining his ground among the Gonds.........

".........Sharply pursued in his retreat from the Mahadeo hills, Appa Sahib was overtaken close to Asseergurh, his escort was routed, and he with his followers must have been taken, had not a part of the garrison sallied and saved the fugitives from their pursuers.........

"Cheetoo got away to the jungles, where he was devoured by a tiger......

"A curious circumstance now occurred. Appa Sahib found means to open secretly from within the fort of Asseergurh a correspondence with Sir John Malcolm, expressing his inclination to surrender himself. As he met frank encouragement, yet did not act upon it, there is no way of accounting for his having thus negotiated, but by supposing him to imagine that, in case of the fort being taken, he might efficaciously plead a purpose which he never really harboured, the voluntarily putting himself into our hands. That he had not the intention of throwing himself upon our generosity, is manifest, from his having preferred to make his escape to Boorhampore in the disguise of a fakeer. He was guided by a sepoy, the adopted son of one Hurrey Sing, who resided in Boorhampore under the protection of the Governor. The latter's concurrence in Appa Sahibs reception in Boorhampore could not be doubted. Concealment, however, could not be expected to last long: so that Appa Sahib was counselled to put himself beyond the reach of British preponderance. He consequently proceeded to Lahore, where he has been allowed to live in absolute privacy on a very scanty allowance from Runjeet Sing. That prince, in affording shelter to Appa Sahib, has done it in a manner which shews a sincere attention not to dissatisfy the British Government......

The Marquess of Hastings' narrative regarding the whereabouts of the whilom Nagpur sovereign ends here. But Appa Saheb did not live long on the bounty of Ranjit Singh at Lahore. H. H. Wilson writes:

"Upon the withdrawal of his (Ranjit Singh's) countenance, Appa Saheb had recourse to a petty Raja, the Raja of Mundi, beyond the first range of the Himalayas, and was suffered to remain there unmolested for several succeeding years. At a subsequent date he returned to Hindustan, and was protected by the Raja of Jodhpur, who was allowed to grant him an asylum, on condition of becoming responsible for his safe custody and peaceable conduct." *

The same author writes again in another part of his history:

"The ex-Rajah of Nagpore, Appa Saheb, had been tempted to quit his asylum in the mountains about the time of the agitation which prevailed in India at the close of the Burmese war: and after various adventures, took sanctuary in the temple of Maha Mandira, a celebrated shrine in the territory of Jodhpur. The Raja was at first required to secure the fugitive and deliver him to the British Agent at Ajmere; but he declined compliance, pleading in excuse his inability to infringe upon the privileges of the temple, and his fear that he should be for ever disgraced in the estimation of all Hindustan if he were to refuse to an unfortunate prince the rights of hospitality. The excuse was admitted, and the demand urged no further; but Man Sing was held responsible for the conduct of his guest, and expected to restrain him from any attempts to disturb the public tranquillity. Some obscure intrigues were set on foot by Appa Saheb with individuals of no note, who engaged to accomplish his restoration to sovereignty; but neither the persons nor the projects were of a character to endanger the security or excite the alarm of the Government of Nagpore."

* *Loc. cit.* p. 77

CHAPTER LVI

THE WAR WITH HOLKAR

A decade before, the English had to conclude peace with Holkar on terms which were very favourable to that prince. Jasavant Rao Holkar died insane before the Marquess of Hastings landed in India and there were disorders and confusion in the principality after his death. The Governor-General thought that it was a very favourable opportunity to humiliate the house of Holkar. The Rajput princes had been turned into feudatories. The Jat princes in the Doab had been reduced to the status of British subjects. Sindhia had been made, in the manner mentioned before, to accept the treaty dictated to him by the Marquess. So, not having any fear in the rear, the Governor-General prepared to attack the territories of the house of Holkar. Some Afghan military adventurers and mercenaries were in the employ of that prince, foremost amongst whom was Amir Khan, whose name has been several times mentioned before. He was undoubtedly in the pay of the English, one of whose historians writes:

"Among the chiefs who received favour from the English was one Ameer Khan, ... Holkar's chief general, to which office he had risen from the condition of a private horseman. This person had, inspite of previous treaties, a considerable portion of Holkar's territory made over to him by Lord Minto, and a formal treaty sealed the bond of amity between this desperate robber and murderer and the East India Company. Although Lord Minto engaged the alliance of this person, it was not until the Government of the Marquis of Hastings that the plunder was perpetrated upon Holkar in his favour, and a treaty formed to secure it to him through no less a personage than Mr. Metcalfe. One passage of Ameer Khan's history will illustrate the character of the man, and the morality of English policy in those days; for there was no pressing necessity to force the English into alliance with him to the disadvantage of other chiefs really worthy of their protection and amity. This Ameer Khan had been literally hired to murder one Sevaee Sing by a potentate who was the rival of the latter. The Ameer found in this commission an employment to his taste, and......accomplished it."*

The above-named historian would not have expressed surprise at "the morality of English policy in those days," had he remembered that the Christian power in India had its origin in treachery and murder, for the Company's servants in the eighteenth century in India encouraged traitors like Mir Jafar and murderers like Raghoba, without whose support they would not have been able to establish their Empire. The same writer says that

"The intrigues between the English and Ameer Khan against the integrity of Holkar's dominion were not honourable to our nation. In connection with them, all persons about the court, all parties in that state, intrigued for and against the English, and against one another. Perjury, perfidy, abduction, assassination, murder, plunder, revolt and civil war rent and stained realms which had owned the sovereignty of the once far-renowned Holkar."†

* Nolan's *History of the British Empire*, Vol. II, pp. 510—511.

† *Ibid.*, p. 521.

It was under such adverse circumstances that the Holkar's army, without any capable leader, was attacked by the British, and the battle of Mahidpur was fought on the 20th December, 1817, in which Holkar's army was routed.

The gallantry and military tactics of the British generals would not have succeeded in gaining the battle of Mehidpur had they not been helped by a traitor in the camp of Holkar. In his Autobiography, Lutfullah asserts that the battle was won only through the treachery of the Nawab Abdul Gafur Khan who was son-in-law of Amir Khan. He writes:

"There would have been a host of about ten thousand armed men to destroy the foreigners, had they lost the battle, but all these hopes were frustrated by news of a contrary nature, which appeared to them incredible at first, considering the strength of Holkar. Little did they know that Nawab Abdul Ghafoor Khan played the part of a traitor to his master, and deserted the field of battle with the force under his command, just at the moment when the English were on the point of losing the battle through the loyal and gallant exertions of Roshan Beg, the Captain-General of Holkar's artillery. The stain of this disgrace clung too firmly to the name of Abdul Ghafoor as long as he lived, to be effaced by his great liberality towards the poor and others: and his son Ghazi Mohamed Khan is not unreproached by the natives of India for his late father's misbehaviour, though he enjoys the district of Jaora, assigned to the family through the favour of the British authorities in India."*

The treaty of Mundisoor, negotiated by Malcolm, reduced Holkar to the position of a feudatory, and he henceforth never appears in the pages of Indian history as a menace or an object of terror to the British.

Malcolm was rewarded for his diplomacy by being appointed to manage the affairs of the territories which were wrested from Holkar.

Although Malleson has not included the battle of Mehidpur amongst the decisive battles of India, it was in reality one of them. In his paper on "Central India under British Supremacy," published in the *Calcutta Review* for 1850, Sir Henry Durand wrote:

"After the battle of Mehidpur, not only the Peishwa's, but the real influence of the Mahratta States of Holkar and Scindia, were dissolved and replaced by British supremacy."

* Pp. 103-104

CHAPTER LVII

THE END OF THE THIRD MARATHA WAR

The hill fortresses of Central India were almost impregnable before the invention of modern destructive weapons of war. Regarding these hill fortresses, Lieutenant Lake wrote in his "Journals of the Sieges of the Madras Army":*

"Nothing is necessary, but a determined Garrison to render such positions perfectly impregnable. Fortunately for us, this latter requisite was wanting......"

Regarding the fortress of Rajdeir, the same author writes :†

"The Engineer, in reporting to the Commanding Officer the result of his reconnaissance, declared his opinion, that, from the great natural strength of this rock, a Garrison of 200 determined men, supplied with the requisite provisions, etc., might bid defiance to the largest and best appointed army ; and that its fall must therefore depend on some fortunate occurrence, which might intimidate the Garrison into a surrender."

Regarding the surrender of this strong fortress, the same author writes :§

"The immediate cause of the surrender of the fortress, was a quarrel which took place in the Garrison, originating in the Brahmin Killedar's refusal to pay to the families of three men who had been killed, the arrears of pay due to them. In revenge for this, the Garrison set fire to his house and the manner in which the flames spread, alarmed them so much, that they were induced to capitulate."

Again, regarding the capture of the fortress of Trimbuck, the same author writes (p. 107) :—

"It is difficult to account for the want of resolution displayed, in the defence of this impregnable fortress. The reasons for it must be sought in the effect produced on the minds of the Garrison, by our rapid advances to the foot of the scarp, and by seeing their escape prevented by the works on the south side. The absence of their Prince, at this time a fugitive surrounded by British Armies, and the extreme improbability of his ever returning to his own dominions, must also have produced an unfavourable effect on the spirit of the Garrison and prevented them from attempting a more protracted resistance. Seventeen other forts fell on the surrender of Trimbuck, and the whole of this country, *perhaps the strongest in the world,* came into our hands in a few weeks, almost without a struggle.

"In contemplating such pusillanimous conduct, even on the part of our enemies, it is difficult to repress a feeling somewhat resembling disappointment. The idea unavoidably arises, that nature intended these hills for other men, and other deeds. She seems to have marked them out as a theatre, on which the battles of freedom and independence might be successfully fought ; for amongst them the undisciplined and half-armed Native would be on a par with the most skilful and experienced veteran ; and even in the stones which cover them, nature has furnished abundant arms for their defence. If these ideas, and the stern character of the scenery which gave rise to them, seem little consonant with the habits and dispositions of the Natives, it should be remembered, that even in India the asserters of liberty have been found ; and that it was from these

* P. 90.

† *Ibid.*, p. 92.

§ P. 97.

very hills, that Sevajee first endeavoured to break the iron bonds, in which his countrymen were held by Aurangzebe. It was amongst these hills, that his enterprises were planned, and from them, that his "living cloud of war was poured forth." It was here, that he laid the foundation of that Power, which in after times retaliated, upon the fallen Emperor of Delhi, the injury, which the intolerant spirit of that Prince's ancestors had inflicted on the Hindu world; and here, the last Mahratta sovereign might have made an effectual struggle for independence, but the spirit was wanting, with which the great founder of the tribe had armed his people for conquest. Thirty fortresses, each of which, with a Sevajee as a master, would have defied the whole Anglo-Indian army, fell unresistingly in a few weeks : and this vast Mahratta Empire, which had overshadowed the East, and before which the star of the Mogul had become pale, was destined to furnish in its turn another great example of the vicissitudes of fortune; and of the instability of the mightiest thrones, the foundations of which are not laid in the affections of the people."

After the surrender of one of the hill forts, namely, that of Talneir, want of humanity was exhibited by the British officers, when every man in the Fort was put to the sword. Regarding this barbarity, Lake writes in his Journals (p. 57) :—

"On the justice of the sentence passed on the killedar and his Arab commander, and on our right to inflict it, were I qualified to pass an opinion, I should feel little disposed to do so; but I may be permitted to deplore, in common with all friends of humanity, that some Ambassador more polished than a British Grenadier, and one acquainted with the language and customs of the Arabs, had not preceded the storming party, to explain to them the terms on which they were to be admittted to quarter...."

The keepers of those fortresses were not often true to their salt and surrendered them, because, in most cases, they must have been bribed to betray their charge.

Asirgarh, one of the strong hill-fortresses of Central India, held out till the 7th April 1819, when, by its surrender, the last Maratha war came to an end. Unfortunately, it was garrisoned mostly by Arab mercenaries who lost nothing by its surrender. Its strength was such that the besiegers made hardly any impression on the besieged, as is evident from the fact that of the latter only forty-three were killed and ninety-five wounded, for the rock and the upper fort towered so high above the batteries of the English that only shells reached them with any effect.

Raja Appa Saheb of Nagpur was reported to have found shelter in the fort of Asirgarh. So, on its surrender, it was thought he would be found there. But, to the great disappointment of the English, he was not there.

It was the occidental diplomacy of Malcolm which made the campaign in Central India terminate so favourably to the Company.

CHAPTER LVIII

THE MARQUESS OF HASTINGS AND THE NAWAB OF OUDH

The Nawab Vazir of Oudh was the only Indian potentate who was not shorn of his territories by the present Governor-General of India. If anything, he was made much of by the Marquess of Hastings, for he was raised to the dignity of a king, and a district which had been wrested from the Nepalese, was added to his kingdom. But the Governor-General did not do these things out of love for that Muhammadan prince. Scheming, intriguing and plotting as that Marquess was, whatever he did was from motives of political expediency and with an eye to his own benefit or some pecuniary advantage resulting to the Company whose servant he was.

At the time when the Marquess of Hastings was sent out as Governor-General of India, Ghazi-ud-deen Hyder was the Nawab Vazir of Oudh. His life was made a burden to him by the Christian Resident, named Major Bailie, attached to his court, who was practising all sorts of refined brutality on him. That the position of the Nawab Vazir was not an enviable one, is evident from what the Governor-General himself has recorded in his private journal, under date, October 13, 1814. *

"Nawab Vizeer had reckoned on being emancipated from the imperious domination of Major Baillie under which his Excellency groaned every hour, but that I had riveted him in his position. Major Baillie dictated to him in the merest trifles, broke in upon him at his palace without notice, whensoever he (Major Baillie) had anything to prescribe, fixed his (Major Baillie's) creatures upon his Excellency with large salaries, to be spies upon all his actions; and above all, lowered his Excellency in the eyes of his family and his subjects by the magisterial tone which he constantly assumed."

However, the Nawab Vazir, in the simplicity of his heart, placed unbounded confidence in the so-called good intentions of the East India Company. So when the Marquess of Hastings visited Lucknow, he was treated right royally and the Vazir even went to the length of calling him his father. The Nawab Vazir was made to pay or rather to advance a loan of one crore of rupees and in exchange for this he was given a territory which did not pay one-sixth of the interest which an investment in the Company's funds would have yielded him.

But then the father promoted his son to the dignity of a king. Here again, he did not do it from any disinterested motive or excessive love for his son. The Nawab Vazir did not benefit in any way from the title of king conferred on him. Major Archer in his work named *Tours in Upper India* (London, 1833), writes :

"In 1819, Ghazee Hyder, the then Vizier, desired the dignity of king, which being acquiesced in by the British Government, though upon the express stipulation that the assumption should not be the means of altering the existing relations, he was crowned King in October of that year."†

* Panini Office Reprint, p. 97.

† Vol. I, p. 2.

Major Archer was present at the coronation, and has described it as an occasion on which "the lord of misrule was in his full potency."

Incidentally, it might also be mentioned here how determined the Marquess of Hastings was to degrade the position of the Emperor of Delhi. A dozen years had hardly elapsed since the Government of India of that day had considered it necessary to intrigue with this descendant of the house of Babar to gain its object, and now that that object had been gained, it was thought proper by this Governor-General to treat the Delhi sovereign with scant courtesy, if not with positive rudeness. He writes in his journal, under date of January 22, 1815.*

"Mr. Metcalfe arrived from Delhi. The king had been carrying on a wearisome negotiation with him to obtain that I should visit him. Mr. Metcalfe always returned the same answer,—namely, that I had expressed myself as very desirous of paying my personal attentions to his Majesty; but had told him (Mr. Metcalfe) that I was restrained from doing so by the knowledge that his Majesty expected my acquiescence in a ceremonial which was to imply his Majesty's being the liege lord of the British possessions. This dependent tenure, Mr. Metcalfe assured him, could never be acknowledged by him......It is dangerous to uphold for the Mussalmans a rallying point sanctioned by our own acknowledgment that a just title to supremacy exists in the king of Delhi. . . . The house of Timour had been put so much out of sight that all habit of adverting to it was failing fast in India; and nothing has kept up the floating notion of a duty owed to the imperial family but our gratuitous and persevering exhibition of their pretensions—an exhibition attended with so much servile obeisance in the etiquettes imposed upon us by the ceremonial of the court."

Regarding this shabby treatment of the Delhi Emperor, Major Archer, in his work already quoted above, wrote:

"That he likes us (the English) the least, there is no doubt, for from our grips his Kingdom can never be wrested, to return again into his own keeping :...His authority they (the British) have long since refused but it was stealthy duplicity, honouring him as long as it was found convenient; and, when no longer requiring the aid of the King's name, that *tower of strength*, they summed up their acknowledgments within the compass of a pension. Those who defend the Company say, that the King would have been worse used by any of the victorious Native powers; thus making the scale of evil the rule of conduct. They acted from motives of pure generosity, perhaps; but merchants are but too rigorous appraisers of profit and loss. On this chapter of accounts, their arithmetic is seldom in error. Let it be stated also, that the King has been shorn of his beams of royalty, his revenues have been seized and converted to the use of strangers, his authority everywhere abrogated but in his own immediate family; in short, he has lost all the rights, powers, and privileges, everything but the name of a King, and King, too, of Hindustan, for the munificent exchange of twelve lacs annually! How pleasant it would be to the rulers of the land to see the heir of the Great Timour defending himself *in forma pauperis* in the petty court for the recovery of small debts in Calcutta."†

* Panini Office Reprint, p. 170.

† Vol. I, pp. 126—127.

CHAPTER LIX

POLITICAL ASPECT OF THE MARQUESS HASTINGS' ADMINISTRATION

Of the trinity of the Governors-General who extended the dominions of the British in India during the first half of the nineteenth century, it must be admitted that the means adopted by the Marquess Hastings appeared in the eyes of the Indian people less objectionable than those of Wellesley or Dalhousie. He appealed partly to arms and not solely to fraud in depriving Indian princes of their territories. And everything being considered just and proper in love and warfare, he has not been so severely handled, and his conduct censured by historians, as were Wellesley and Dalhousie. Perhaps the war with the Gurkhas was not of his own seeking; it might have been forced upon him.

But it cannot be denied that he provoked the Maratha princes to war, which, taking all the facts and circumstances into consideration, must be pronounced to have been an aggressive measure on the part of the Governor-General. He was prompted to undertake the war for his own personal gain and distinctions as well as for making the British Government of India, the head of what he was pleased to call the "Indian Confederacy." The following record in his *Private Journal* should be adduced in support of the above statement:

"February 1st, 1814.

"Our deficiency in point of numbers might be balanced by the goodwill acquired from neighbouring powers through our justice and moderation, whence we might look to security against attack. I find nothing of the sort. We are engaged in captious bickerings with all around us. On my taking the reins of government into my hand seven different quarrels likely to demand the decision of arms were transferred to me. Of these Machery, Rewah, Sawant-Warri, and Kurnool have required military operations. The results have been favourable; but except in the case of Rewah, where it was necessary to punish the Sainghar chiefs, who had waylaid and massacred a party of our sepoys, not one of these enterprises presents an object which (putting the justice out of the question) was worth the effort. . . . A much more important consideration is that these paltry triumphs leave an inveterate spirit of animosity towards us in the breast of those whom we have overborne.

"A rational jealousy of our power is not likely to excite half the intrigues against us which must naturally be produced by the wanton provocations which we have been giving on trivial subjects to all the states around us.

"With a degree of concert thus indistinctly fashioned, those states must be ready to start up into combination whenever they may see us occupied with an enemy capable of employing our forces for any time. It may not be long before such an enemy may exhibit himself. The terms of amity on which we at present stand with Ranjit Singh are no guarantee against those projects which his known dislike of us, and his confidence in his own strength, have probably made him revolve in secret. Having reduced all the other communities of the Sikhs beneath his sway, and having subjected all the other territories in his vicinity, he possesses a force which the turbulence of his disposition will impel him to use; and there is no field for its exertion but the part of the British Dominions bordering on the Sutlej. Should the King of Ava, who conceives his armies to be irresistible, at the same moment invade Chittagong, the opposing those attacks at the two extremities of our empire must ungarnish our prodigiously extended flanks. Then, there would be an opening for all the vengeance of the petty states to which I have alluded, as well as for the

rapacity of the Pindaries. Such a juncture might be the signal of general effort against us without any apparently adequate cause of war. We have not simply to look to the irritation of those whom we have actually scourged with nettles. Each sovereign must have brought the case home to himself, and must have secretly sympathized with the durbars which he saw insulted and humiliated. The Nawab Vizir imagined himself to have purchased exemption from these petty but galling vexations by the cession of a large part of his dominions—a cession made under the assurance of his being perfectly independent in what remained. We have been authoritatively interfering with all the minor concerns of his domestic rule, till we have driven him to a desperation which he proclaimed in open durbar. The Rajah of Berar, nominally our friend, has evinced repeatedly his hostile suspicion of us. The Nizam does not disguise his absolute hatred of us, though he is in shackles whence he cannot extricate himself. The Rajah of Mysore and the British Resident are engaged in a contest of mutual crimination. Scindiah is in the utmost difficulty to find means for keeping his army together, and nothing could be to him a temptation equal to the occasion of plundering our opulent provinces.

"Amir Khan, who wields Holkar's forces, is professedly inimical to us.

"Holkar's dominions being exhausted, his army must ravage some other country, otherwise it will dissolve; and he is now *negotiating with the Pindaries for a joint attack on Nagpur.* This object, on a former occasion, was held so eventually injurious to us that Lord Minto raised an army to march (though under no obligation of a treaty) to protect the Rajah, and baffled the undertaking. I have not money (the Company having no credit in Calcutta) to equip an army even if I saw the policy, as Lord Minto did, of defending Nagpore. Yet I am aware of the possibility that apprehension might make the Rajah suggest to those who are threatening him, a more attractive object for their views by offering to join in an extensive combination for the invasion of our possessions.

"In short, I see around me the elements of a war more general than any which we have hitherto encountered in India.

"This formidable mischief has arisen from our not having defined to ourselves or made intelligible to the native princes, the quality of the relations which we have established with them.

"In our treaties with them we recognise them as independent sovereigns. Then we send a resident to their courts. Instead of acting in the character of ambassador, he assumes the functions of a dictator; interferes in all their private concerns; countenances refractory subjects against *them; and makes the most ostentatious exhibition of this exercise of authority.* To secure to himself the support of our government, he urges some interest which, under the color thrown upon it by him, is strenuously taken up by our Council; and the Government identifies itself with the Resident not only on the single point but on the whole tenor of his conduct. In nothing do we violate the feelings of the native princes so much as in the decisions which we claim the privilege of pronouncing with regard to the succession to the musnud. We constantly oppose our construction of Mahomedan law to the right which the Moslem princes claim from usage to choose among their sons the individual to be declared the heir-apparent. It is supposed that by upholding the right of primogeniture we establish an interest with the eldest son which will be beneficial to us when he comes to the throne. I believe nothing can be more delusive. He will profess infinite gratitude as long as our support is useful to him; but, once seated, his subsequent attachment will always be regulated by the convenience of the day. He, too, will in his turn have to feel our interference in the succession as well as in minor instances. With regard to the latter it might be argued that some interest of the Company is always really involved. The simple existence of such an interest is not the true question. What should be considered, is whether the matter be of a proximity or magnitude to make the prosecution of it desirable at the expense of the disgust and estrangement which you sow by the procedure.

"If a willing obedience to the influence of our Government be deemed an essential point, all subordinate concerns ought to be indifferent."*

Panini Office Reprint, pp. 24 *et seq.*

"February 6th, 1814.

"Our object ought to be, to render the British Government paramount in effect, if not declaredly, so. We should hold the other states as vassals, in substance, though not in name ; not precisely as they stood in the Mogul Government but possessed of perfect internal sovereignty and only bound to repay the guarantee and protection of their possessions by the British Government with the pledge of two great feudal duties.

"First, they should support it with all their forces in any call. Second, they should submit their mutual differences to the head of the confederacy (our Government) without attacking each other's territories. A few subordinate stipulations on our part, with immunities secured in return to the other side (especially with regard to succession), would render the arrangement ample without complication or undue latitude. Were this made palatable to a few states, as perhaps it easily might, the abrogation of treaties with the powers who refuse to submit to the arrangement would soon work upon their apprehensions in a way that would bring them at last within the pale of the compact. The completion of such a system, which must include the extinction of any pretension to preeminence in the court of Delhi, demands time and favourable coincidences. While on the other hand the difficulties bequeathed to me are imminent, and might break upon me at any instant. A new Government always produces some suspension in animosities. I have endeavoured to improve the juncture by courteous and conciliatory language to the native powers ; and I do hope I may remove considerable soreness. As for the rest, fortune and opportunities must determine ; but it is always well to ascertain to oneself what one would precisely desire had one the means of commanding the issue."*

His declaration to undertake the war for the extermination of the Pindaris was merely a blind to conceal his real object, which was nothing else but that of destroying the power of the Marathas. In the words of a British historian of India, John Malcolm Ludlow, who writes :

"Thus ended the second (or third) Mahratta war,—the last great struggle carried on by the English against the Marathas as a nation. One by one all the Maratha princes had been checked or subdued by force of arms. Yet it is difficult to repress the feeling, that the war, commenced as against each particular chief by some aggression on his part, was rendered inevitable by the proceedings of the English. To assemble 100,000 men for the extirpation of 30,000 ill-armed freebooters, the operations having to be carried on in the heart of the Mahratta country, must have seemed, to each Mahratta prince, a direct threat against him. That there was no previous coalition on their part against us is clearly proved by the desultory nature of their proceedings, even when in the presence of a common danger they might try to combine."†

The war resulted in the Governor-General becoming richer to the tune of several thousands of pounds than when he had landed on the shores of India. In acknowledgment of the glorious issue of the Maratha war, the East India Company voted the Marquess of Hastings £ 60,000, for the purchase of an estate to be settled in such manner as might perpetuate the memory of his great services.

The territories added to the Company's Government extended over 50,000 square miles. The whole of the Peshwa's dominions, excepting that portion of the country which was set apart for the Raja of Satara, came under the sway of the British. The Sindhia, Holkar and Nagpur princes were mulcted of their rich and fertile provinces, and all these territories came to be designated under the euphonious title of "Central Provinces and Central India."

* *Ibid.*, p. 30.
† History, Vol. II, pp. 32—33.

Even the Rajput princes, as price for the protection they had solicited at the hands of the British, were made to contribute both in cash and in land, and thus came into existence the province of Ajmere.

Lord Hastings never cared for ameliorating the condition of the natives of India whom he was sent out to govern. His guiding principle seems to have been to enrich himself and his employers and indirectly his country at the expense of the people of India. It was during his administration that the industries of India were mostly ruined by unjust taxes and exactions. Ludlow writes

"Some very unscrupulous. measures, to say the least, in customs' legislation belong, however, also to this period. In the first place, the manufactures of India were, it may be said, deliberately ruined by a general lowering or total abolition of import duties on articles, the produce or manufactures of Great Britain, without reciprocal advantages being given to Indian produce or manufactures when brought home."*

He sanctioned the Ryotwari System in Madras, which has done more than anything else to 'abase' the population of that presidency. Regarding the introduction of the Ryotwari System, Ludlow writes

"The system of finance with which Sir Thomas Munro's name is inseparably connected, has worked more deeply than all other causes put together, to 'abase' the whole population which was made subject to it, to render the natives 'more abject and less able to govern themselves,' for, like Lord Wellesley's plan of protection and Subsidiary Alliances, it had this one fault : that it ignored human nature. Very fascinating, indeed, was the thought of taking account, year by year, of the cultivator's circumstances, asking no more of him but precisely what he could afford at the particular time. True ; but it presupposes only these few little things: 1st. That the Government shall have at its disposal an unlimited number of angelic officals, perfectly familiar with the languages and customs of the country : 2nd. That such angelic officials shall possess illimitable leisure ; and should be capable of unnerring punctuality in their movements : 3rd. That to such angelic officials of unlimited leisure and unerring punctuality, the whole revenue functions of the Government shall be confined."†

It should be remembered that Sir Thomas Munro was no friend of the Indian people, for he could write with a light heart :

"I have got Vettel Hegada and his heir-apparent and his principal agents hanged; and I have no doubt that I shall be able to get the better of any other vagabond Rajah that may venture to rebel."§

He was the apt pupil of General Wellesley who wrote to him,

"as to the wishes of the people, I put them out of the question."**

Sir Thomas Munro it is needless to say, always acted on this advice. Sir Thomas is also given credit for his advocating the employment of Indians in the public services of their country.

Sir Thomas Munro, is also given credit for the evidence he gave before the Parliamentary Committee of 1813, on the occasion of the renewal of the Charter of the

* Part II, pp. 43-44.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38

§ Gleig's Life of Munro, Vol. I., p. 270.

** *Ibid.*, p. 266.

East India Company. This evidence was not given from disinterested motives. It was meant to strengthen the hands of his employers against those co-religionists and compatriots of his who were clamouring for the abolition of the monopoly of the Company and for the free influx of Britishers into India to civilize the "heathens" of that land.

It may be urged in defence of Lord Hastings that he himself had no hand in sanctioning the Ryotwari System, for he had merely to carry out the orders of his employers, the Directors of the East India Company. How greedy they were of earthly riches, and in what light they looked upon their Indian possessions, will be evident from the following extracts from Financial Letters to Bengal, 6th September, 1813, and 23rd September, 1817. In the latter the Court observes :

"We must explicitly apprise you, that it is to India only, that we look for the supplies necessary to enable us to defray the home territorial charges, by the punctual repayment to the commercial branch of all sums advanced by that branch for territorial purposes in "England;" and again, we cannot contemplate without alarm the possibility of the case assumed by you, however hypothetically, that eventually, it would be your duty to show, that however valuable India would still remain to England, even in a pecuniary point of view, as the course of lucrative commerce and as paying a *vast tribute in the returns of private fortunes; yet she demanded in return some aid from England to* enable her revenues to bear the expenses necessary to preserve her."

With reference to the above, H. H. Wilson writes:

"Divested of all circumlocution, this is an assumption that the people of this country (England) should be taxed for the sake of supporting Indian commerce, and of enabling private individuals in India to acquire fortunes, an assumption which we are confident this country would utterly reject."*

It was to enrich England that India's interests were to be sacrificed. To quote the same historian again:

"The Customs had somewhat declined, but this arose from a measure adopted shortly after the renewal of the charter by which, in consequence of orders from home, the duties were generally lowered, and a variety of articles, the produce or manufacture of Great Britain, wholly exempted from any charge upon their being imported into India. As similar immunities were not granted to the manufactures or products of India in the ports of the United Kingdom, this was a piece of selfish legislation in which the interests of the dominant country were alone consulted, and those of the subordinate dependency deliberately injured, the latter being not only deprived of a legitimate source of revenue, but being further exposed to an unequal competition under which native industry was already rapidly declining. Some compensation was made to the country by the augmentation of its commerce."

Then, in a footnote, he adds:

"It might be argued, that India benefited by the reduced price of the commodities imported from Great Britain, in proportion to the amount of the duty remitted. But this was disadvantageous in another respect, as it rendered the articles of domestic production still less able to compete with foreign articles in the market, and further discouraged native industry. The competition was unfair. India was young in the process of manufacture, and was never likely to improve, if her manufactures were to be crushed in their infancy. Could time have been allowed for the acquisition of experience and the introduction of machinery, her cotton fabrics and her metals would probably have been saleable in her own markets for a less cost than those of Europe. A native sovereign would undoubtedly have given India a chance by the imposition of protective duties."†

* *The History of British India*, Mill and Wilson, Vol. 8, p. 400.
† *Ibid.*, p. 397.

Had Lord Hastings been possessed of any conscience, he would have strongly protested against all these unjust measures; and if his protest were of no avail, he should have resigned the office of Governor-General of India, rather than be an instrument in destroying the prosperity of the millions of India's inhabitants.

While, no doubt, he was guilty of much unnecessary bloodshed, and the miseries he inflicted on many Indian princes, nobles, and chiefs, he should be given the credit of a foresighted statesman in that he gave the warning that the frontiers of the British Empire in India should not be pushed to the river Indus and the countries around and beyond it. The conquest of Sindh could have been very easily accomplished by him and that, too, without in any way enhancing the reputation of the British for bad faith, (as the subsequent conquest of that country by Sir Charles Napier undoubtedly did), had he been inclined to do so. When during his administration, the little principality of Cutch was drawn into an alliance with the British Government of India, which therefore commenced to interfere in the affairs of that State, the Ameers of Sind were naturally alarmed by having the English as their neighbours.

H. H. Wilson quotes from manuscript records the views of Lord Hastings regarding the extension of the boundaries of the British Empire of India to the banks of the Indus.

"Few things," the Government of Bengal remarked, "would be more impolitic than a war with Sindh, as its successful prosecution would not only be unprofitable, but an evil. The country was not worth possessing, and its occupation would involve us in all the intrigues and wars, and incalculable embarrassments of the countries beyond the Indus. Hostilities might become unavoidable hereafter; but it was wise to defer their occurrence as long as possible."*

How devoutly one could have wished that these views had prevailed in the councils of his successors, like Bentinck, Auckland, Ellenborough and Dalhousie. That would have saved India millions of money and thousands of lives, besides which all those provinces would have enjoyed independent existence and consequently the happiness which independence alone confers.†

* *Ibid.*, p. 316.

† It was Metcalfe who induced Lord Hastings not to go to war with the Sindhians. Kaye in his "Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe" (pages 146—148) has given extracts from Metcalfe's Minute on this subject. Kaye says:—"These last extracts are made from the draft of a paper, drawn up in 1819 or 1820, for Lord Hastings, when Metcalfe was Political Secretary. A party of Scindians, on their way through Cutch to Bombay, had been attacked by a body of our people in pursuit of plunderers; in revenge for which the Scindians devastated a village in Cutch. This affair wellnigh occasioned a war between the English and Scindian powers; but the amicable counsels fostered by Metcalfe, which prevailed at Calcutta, averted hostilities for a time. He lived, however, to see and deplore the rupture which subsequently converted Scinde into a British principality."

CHAPTER LX

RECALL OF THE MARQUESS OF HASTINGS

The Marquess of Hastings was recalled from the Governor-Generalship of India, because he was not an honest man. Writes Torrens in his *Empire in Asia: How we came by it: A book of Confessions* (pp. 290—291, Panini Office Reprint):

"To meet the military expenditure which four successive campaigns had entailed, the Governor-General was obliged to raise money on any terms that might be demanded from an insolvent treasury. He borrowed largely from the Vizier of Oude; and when other securities were not forthcoming, he sold him the provinces left from the Goorkhas,—the foolish Sadat Ali forgetting that he who gave for a valuable consideration could take away without one. Provinces and their inhabitants were treated as chattels by this chivalrous statesman of the superfine court of the Regency, who being a man of sentiment and honour, and not as other men, might do, in short anything he pleased. It pleased him to sanction a near relative becoming a partner in the financial house of W. Palmer and Co., at Hyderabad, whose usurious dealings with the Nizam were of a nature to call forth the denunciation of the Court of Directors, as being utterly regardless of the limits of decorum. The newly made Marquis defended Palmer and Co. as injured and insulted individuals and challenged the investigation of accounts which had been framed upon figure-proof principles. The friends of the Viceroy relied upon his character as a man notoriously indifferent as to money to show that he could not have been in any way to blame in the shameful business at Hyderabad. Had he not squandered his patrimony, nobody knew how, and then offered to govern India for the benefit of his creditors? Could anything be more gallant or unsordid? And was he not now "most noble?" The Nizam, it is true, was simply fleeced by a firm of whom the Viceroy's relation was one. But no one could believe that the Marquis knew anything of the transactions; and the tenderness of his domestic affections forbade him to think evil of his kinsfolk. So the Nizam was robbed; and Lord Hastings came home; and,—that was all. Lord Amherst, who succeeded to the Government in 1823, was not a fine gentleman of the George IV. school, but was only an honest man; and one of his first acts, therefore, was to lend the Nizam money to liquidate his debts to Palmer and Co. which he did upon condition that the Court of Hyderabad should have no more dealings with the firm, soon afterwards compelled thereby to suspend their commercial enterprises. The conqueror of the Gurkhas and the Marhattas reappeared in London society as badly off as ever; and after having seized and occupied for a season the throne of Tamerlane, he was glad to take the Governorship of Malta as a sinecure pension for his closing days."

CHAPTER LXI

THE ADMINISTRATION OF LORD AMHERST (1823–1828)

The Marquess of Hastings, without waiting for the arrival of his successor from England, left India for good. The senior member of the Supreme Council was appointed to officiate as Governor-General till the arrival of the' permanent incumbent of that post. Mr. Adams, who happened to be senior member, was brought up in the atmosphere of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, and the free expression of opinion by the public press was distasteful to him. He did not like to leave it free and untrammeled, but being clothed in brief authority exhibited his power by forcibly shipping off one Mr. J. S. Buckingham to Europe, whose offence was that he had published in the *Calcütta Joürnal,* of which he was the editor, some remarks on a Scotch clergyman which the acting Governor-General did not like.

Happily, Mr. Adams' tenure of office was only for seven months; for on the first August, 1823, Lord Amherst landed in Calcutta and was installed as Governor-General.

The choice of the authorities in England did not at first fall on Lord Amherst as successor to the Marquess of Hastings. They offered it to Mr. George Canning, on whose refusal at first and then on his inability to come out to India, Lord Amherst was appointed to that office.

Lord Amherst derived his title from his uncle, who gained the baton of field-marshal, and, for the high reputation he acquired as Commander-in-Chief of the army in America from 1758 to 1764, was 'rewarded with a peerage. So the Governor-General could not boast of being the son of a peer, or of blue blood coursing in his veins.

Lord Amherst had been a few months only in India when he declared war against Burma.

CHAPTER LXII

THE FIRST BURMESE WAR

To understand the causes and circumstances which led to the First Burmese War, it is necessary to go back to the period when Minto was the Governor-General of India. During his tenure of office, persons living within the territory of the East India Company invaded the kingdom of Burma and returned with their spoils to India. The chief of these raiders was one Kingberring. His antecedents are thus described by Minto and his colleagues in a despatch to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, dated the 23rd January, 1812 :

"In the early part of the past year a native of Arracan, named Kingberring, whose ancestor as well as himself possessed lands to a considerable extent in that province, near the frontier of Chittagong, and who in consequence of his having incurred the displeasure, and been exposed to the resentment of the King of Ava, took refuge with a number of his followers in the district of Chittagong, about fourteen years ago meditated the design of embodying those followers, as well as the other Mugs, who many years since emigrated from Arracan, and invading the latter province. This project he actually carried into execution in the month of May 1811, having either by persuasion, or by intimidation, induced a large body of the Mugs, settled in Chittagong, to join his standard."

Under the circumstances it was natural for the authorities of Burma to believe that the invasion of the province was instigated and supported by the British Government. The latter did not offer any compensation to the Burmese Government for the injuries suffered by its subjects; but sent an envoy "to undeceive the Burmese Court, with regard to" the British Government's "supposed participation in the proceedings of Kingberring."

Minto had also another object in view in sending the envoy to Burma.

"*Independently, however, of the importance of this object founded on the solicitude of* Government to avoid being placed in a state of war with the Kingdom of Ava, it appeared to be essential also with reference to the safety of the British subjects and British property at Rangoon."

The depressed state of the Company's finances did not allow Minto to follow in the foot-steps of Wellesley and go to war with the neighbouring states. But he tried to achieve his object by diplomacy and sending to different powers ambassadors, whose profession was to lie as well as to espy out the strength of the Courts to which they were accredited.

Captain Canning was selected for the situation of an Envoy to the Court of Ava. He had been twice before to Burma, first in 1803 as British Agent at Rangoon, and a second time in 1809, to explain the nature of the blockade imposed upon the trade with the Isles of France. He was therefore peculiarly qualified for the duty of Envoy and was appointed as such on a salary of Rs. 1500 a month. He proceeded to Rangoon in the latter end of September 1811, in the ship *Amboyna*, under an escort consisting of 112 Sepoys, and taking with him presents of the value of Rs. 10,000 for the King of Burma.

The authorities in Burma entertained the belief that a large force of Mugs under Kingberring could not have been collected in a British province, nor the invasion have taken place, without the knowledge and participation of the British Government. The belief was very strong in the minds of the Burmese authorities and owing to that conviction, a few British ships were seized and detained at Rangoon. At the same time a Burmese envoy was also despatched to Calcutta for making representation on the subject of the transactions in Arracan.

The British ships were subsequently released. Captain Canning ascribed their liberation to the effect of the personal interests of the Viceroy of Rangoon, "who, deeply engaged in commercial speculations, was averse to the adoption of measures tending to disturb the relations of amity between the two states."

Negotiations were also carried on between the representatives of the Raja of Arracan and the Magistrate of Chittagong. The Burmese authorities demanded the surrender of Kingberring and other insurgent Mug refugees, together with the Civil Surgeon of Chittagong, named Dr. M. 'Rae, against whom the charge was preferred by the Raja of Arracan of having patronized Kingberring. From the manner in which the Burmese authorities persisted in accusing the British of instigating the invasion of Arracan, it does not seem improbable that they might have done so.

What must have strengthened their belief was the manner in which the emigrants from Arracan were treated in Chittagong. It is on record that in the years 1797 and 1798, between thirty and forty thousand persons emigrated from Arracan into the Chittagong District. An officer, Captain Cox, was employed to superintend their location, and the situation in which they were located was subsequently known as Cox's Bazar. The natives of Arracan were encouraged to emigrate into the Company's territory of Chittagong by lands being assigned to them sufficient for their maintenance. H. H. Wilson (Vol. IX, p. 11.) writes that "the Government of Bengal had resolved to admit the emigrants to the advantages of permanent colonisation, and assigned them unoccupied lands in the southern portion of the district." These fugitives used to disturb the peace of the Burmese Kingdom.

Lord Minto and his councillors also admitted the just grounds of complaint of the Burmese against the British Government. In their despatch to the Court of Directors, dated the 1st August, 1812, they wrote:

> "The State of Ava had sustained a deep injury at the hands of men who were under our authority and protection, and derived their means of committing it from our territory. The Burmese Government had, therefore, some plausible reason for charging us with a participation in that njury. Under this impression, its officers conceived they had a right to demand the surrender of the immediate perpetrators of the outrage."

The demand of the Burmese authorities for the surrender of Kingberring and other Mug insurgent chiefs was not an unjustifiable one—indeed, it was founded on precedents. For some twenty years previously, that is, in 1793, when some insurgent Burmese chiefs of note fled into the Company's territorry of Chittagong, they were delivered to the Burmese authorities and were dealt with according to the laws of their country.

But the British Government was not willing to do that reparation to the Burmese which the laws of nations declare just and equitable to the aggrieved party. Captain Canning was playing the part of a spy. He was taking note of the military strength of the Burmese Government. He proposed to his Government to enter into something like subsidiary alliance with Burma and thus to reduce it to the position of a feudatory state of India. In their despatch to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, dated the 4th March, 1812, Lord Minto and his colleagues wrote:

"Captain Canning also relates, that antecedently to the arrival of the intelligence of the success of the Burmese arms against the insurgents, the Viceroy, in a private conversation with the envoy's interpreter, had remarked of what great utility a battalion of Sepoys would be in suppressing the insurrection; intimating, at the same time, that such a force, if furnished by us, would of course be paid for by the Burmese Government. . . . Captain Canning, . . . conceiving it not improbable that some such proposal might be made by the Court of Ava, and desired to receive a communication of our sentiments on the subject, stated that without further specific orders from us he should of course decline acceding to such a proposal; but observing at the same time, that should it enter into the views of *Government to obtain a preponderating influence in the Burmese, dominions, the present was certainly the most favorable moment, as the weakness of the Government and general discontent of the people would put the whole country at the disposal of a very small British force.*"

The words which have been italicised in the above extract leave little room to doubt that Kingberring and other insurgents had been instigated by the British Government to invade the Burmese dominion with some ulterior object in view.

But Captain Canning had so well noted the military strength of Burma, that he even advised the British Government to go to war with the state. In their despatch to the Court of Directors, dated 1st August, 1812, Lord Minto and his colleagues write:

"The observations stated by Captain Canning . . . regarding the advantages with which the British Government would enter upon a contest with the power of Ava, were unquestionably well founded. The coasts and provinces of that country are certainly exposed to our attack without the means of defence, and the only part of our territory accessible to the Burmese forces might with ease be effectually protected. Of our complete and speedy success in the war, therefore, little doubt could be be entertained."

But at that time it was not convenient for the British Government to launch on a war.

"We observed, that the expediency or inexpediency of engaging in a contest with the state of Ava did not altogether depend upon the advantages with which it might be undertaken and the prospect of success; that great inconvenience and embarrassment would attend it with reference to other interests and exigencies of the public service . . . and we should consider the extension of our dominion to the Eastward and Southward to be more burthensome than beneficial; and that those considerations outweighed on the whole, at least at that time, the object which we allowed to be desirable, of checking the arrogance and presumption of that weak and contemptible state."

It is clear then why the British Government was so unwilling to make amends to the Burmese for the losses and injuries the latter had suffered at the hands of Kingberring and other domiciled fugitives of the Company's territory. The British Government were making preparations for a war with the Burmese, whom they were bent upon irritating and provoking to war.

What a successful spy Captain Canning proved to be is evident from Minto's dispatch, dated the 21st October, 1812, where Captain Canning is credited with

"acquiring that intimate knowledge of the internal condition of the dominion of Ava, the character of its government, and the state of its power and resources, which future events may render essentially important to the interests of the public service."

According to the diplomatic language of Minto and his councillors, Captain Canning's mission of Burma was a successful one. In their despatch of 21st October, 1812, they wrote:

"We observed, that we considered Captain Canning not only to have accomplished the objects of his mission in the utmost degree practicable under the disadvantages and difficulties arising from the ignorance and arrogance of the barbarous Government to which he had been accredited, by establishing at the Courts of Ummeerapoora and Rangoon the belief which, independently of his mission, they could not easily have been induced to admit, that the British Government had no concern in the invasion of Kingberring, and by obtaining in consequence the recall of the Burmese troops from the frontier of Chittagong ; but to have rendered his mission subservient to purposes of a more general and comprehensive nature, by inspiring the Burmese authorities with juster notions of the character, principles and power of the British Government, by exacting the respect which was due to it, by supplying to those authorities motives of conduct calculated to restrain the ebullitions of their accustomed insolence and haughtiness, and to render practicable, a continuance of the intercourses of amity between the two states."

The unvarnished truth is just the reverse of the above, which is the language of diplomacy. Captain Canning did not inspire the Burmese "with juster notions of the character, principles, and power of the British Government," for had it been so, the war would never have ensued.

Year after year, whenever the season was propitious, Kingberring used to collect his adherents, the fugitive Mugs, and invade Arracan. The British Government made profuse promises to the Burmese authorities for his apprehension ; but all these seem to have been mere show, for no systematic efforts were ever made to capture him—no efforts like those which were considered necessary to seize the leaders of the Pindaris and to crush their hordes. Uninterrupted or very probably secretly encouraged by the British, Kingberring and his followers committed depredations in the dominion of Burma, and when defeated, returned to, and found asylum in, the Company's territory. Their pursuit by the Burmese troops in the British district was strictly forbidden. This state of affairs continued for years. Kingberring, however, died at the commencement of the year 1815.

The news of the death of this insurgent chief was communicated by the British Government to the Burmese authorities. In the despatch from the Governor-General in Council at Fort William in Bengal, to the Court of Directors of the East India Company, dated the 20th December, 1817, it is stated:

"As the death of Kingberring was an occurrence of considerable interest to the Burmese Government, the Vice-President in Council was of opinion that a communication of the intelligence to the Governor of Arracan from the British Government would not fail to be regarded as an acceptable act of friendship, as well as a proof of the sincerity of the disposition which the British Government had uniformly professed to discount the proceedings of the insurgents."

The death of Kingberring was expected to produce tranquillity in Chittagong and Arracan. But this was not to be. The mantle of Kingberring had fallen on other fugitive chiefs. So again the Burmese authorities made a demand for the surrender of the Mug insurgents. But a compliance with the demand was declined

"on the grounds of its being inconsistent with the principles of the British Government to deliver up a race of people who had sought protection in its territory, and had resided in it upwards of thirty years."*

It is not improbable that the Burmese authorities, being insulted and slighted by the British, and their dominion being invaded by men whom they suspected of being instigated by the British, were inspired with feelings of hostility against the latter. They could not have gone to war with a strong Power like the British single-handed. Perhaps the Burmese Government sought an alliance with the native powers of India in order to expel the English from India. In the despatch from the Governor-General in Council to the Directors of the East India Company, dated the 24th June, 1813, it is stated:

"The probability of some extravagant scheme being in the contemplation of the Burmese Government was in some measure supported by the narrative of a merchant of Chittagong, who had lately returned to that station from Arracan ..... The sum of the information collected from the merchant,... was, that a plan had been formed by the Burmese Government for uniting the principal States of India in a Confederacy against the British Government, with a view to expel the British force from India. . . . . .

"Visionary and absurd as are the schemes ascribed to the King of Ava, we were not disposed to discredit the report of their being actually entertained by the ignorant, arrogant and barbarous government of that country."

It was suspected that emissaries of the King of Ava were intriguing with the Marathas. In the despatch from the Governor-General in Council to the Court of Directors, dated the 17th March, 1820, it is stated :

"The Governor of Merghege, a Burman chief of great eminence, had been permitted to visit the upper provinces for professed purposes connected with religion. There is reason to surmise that his real object was to ascertain the real strength and determination of the Marathas, in consequence of previous overtures from them ; and it is probable that he had adopted delusive notions of both."

We cannot blame the Burmese for the step they took. Indeed, they were compelled to adopt it in self-preservation. The English had been scheming for the conquest of Burma and their attitude to that State was anything but friendly. But the Marathas had been crushed and there was no other native power in India whose alliance could have been of any avail to the Burmese.

They turned their attention to Assam, where discord and dissensions were at that time the normal state of affairs. They imitated the English in their dealings with that State. They took advantage of the unsettled condition of Assam and annexed it to the Burmese Empire. This was considered a grievance by the English. In a despatch from the Governor-General in Council to the Court of Directors, dated the 31st July, 1823, it is stated :

* Papers relating to East India Affairs : *viz.*, Discussions with the Burmese Government, p. 116, paragraph 23.

"Your honorable Court will be apprised by our regular reports, that the Government of Avá has taken advantage of the dissensions prevailing in the Assamese territory, to obtain military occupation of the country, and to set aside its native princes; thus the Burmese nation has come in contact with our territories, at another and most inconvenient point, and by the possession of Assam they have acquired the command of the upper part of the Burrampooter."

Again in another despatch, dated the 12th September, 1823, it is stated :

"Mr. Scott's letter...contains some remarks on the subject of the occupation of Assam by the Burmese, which will, doubtless, attract the attention of Your Honourable Court.

"He observes, that the Burmese having obtained complete possession of Assam, and a person of that nation (Mengee Maha Silwa) having been appointed to the supreme authority, the country may now be considered as a province of the Burmah Empire; and although it appeared from Lieutenant Davidson's last letter that he was satisfied in regard to the amicable disposition of their commander, and that he did not consider any immediate reinforcement of his detachment necessary, yet the substitution of a warlike, and, comparatively speaking, powerful government, in the place of the feeble administration that formerly ruled Assam, in a situation so commanding, and with such extensive means of offence, would no doubt render it necessary that some permanent measures should be adopted for the future security of the Rungpore frontier, and of the country on the lower parts of the Burrampooter, Megna and Ganges.

"From the account of the equipment of the Burmese forces furnished by Lieutenant Davidson, he conceived it obvious, that if inclined at any time to assert their claim to the Dacca province, or to plunder that rich country, it will in future be impossible for the British power, either effectually to oppose them, or to overtake them on their retreat, without some other description of force than troops unwilling, or unaccustomed to act both as boatmen and soldiers."

In the above will be noticed the anxiety of the English to go to war with the Burmese. That they even intrigued with the Assamese to expel the Burmese is evident from the following paragraph from the despatch from which extracts have already been made above :

"We informed Mr. Scott that we had long been sensible of the evil resulting from the conquest of Assam by the Burmese, *and should view, with much satisfaction, any successful attempt on the part of its oppressed inhabitants to expel that people*; but in the present state of our relations with Ava, no countenance could be given by us, directly or indirectly, to the efforts of the Assamese to recover their independence."

Of course, the above is couched in diplomatic language. If divested of the cloud of words, it means that they were doing everything in their power to provoke the Burmese to hostilities.

The Burmese were Buddhists by religion and so were not divided into castes as the Hindus of India. They were a compact homogeneous nation, and education was prevalent in Burma to a degree which was unknown in Christian countries at that time. It is evident that the Burmese were now bent upon extending their Empire. H. H. Wilson* writes:

"The vigorous despotism of the government, and the confident courage of the people, crowned every enterprise with success, and for above half a century the Burman arms were invariably victorious, whether wielded for attack or defence. Shortly after their insurrection against Pegu, the Burmans became the masters of that kingdom. They next wrested valuable districts of the Tenasserim coast from Siam. They repelled with great gallantry, a formidable invasion from China, and by

* *Narrative of the Burmese War*, pp. 1-2.

the final annexation of Arakan, Manipur, and Assam, to the empire, they established themselves throughout the whole of the narrow, but extensive tract of the country, which separates the Western provinces of China along the Eastern boundaries of Hindustan. Along the greater part of this territory they threatened the open plains of British India, and they only awaited a plausible pretext to assail the barrier, which in their estimation, as presumptuously as idly, opposed the further prosecution of their triumphs."

So the British were alarmed when the Burmese annexed Assam; for, to quote the above-mentioned author again:

"The vicinity of a powerful and ambitious neighbour was, therefore, substituted for a feeble and distracted state; and this proximity was the more a subject of reasonable apprehension as from the country being intersected by numerous rivers, and from the Burmas being equally prepared to combat by water as by land, it was at any time in their power to invade and plunder the British provinces, without its being possible to offer effective opposition or to intercept their retreat, under the existing constitution of our defensive force."*

The British were not to be so easily nonplussed by the Burmese. They intrigued with the prince of Kachar, whom they intended to take under their protection. By this arrangement

"they were enabled to occupy the principal passes into the lower lands of Sylhet and thus effectively oppose the advance of the Burmas from the district of Manipur, which they had some short time previously reduced to their authority."†

The treaty was concluded between Mr. David Scott, Agent to the Governor-General, on the part of the Honourable East India Company, and Raja Govind Chander Naryn of Kachar on the 6th of March, 1824. By this treaty the Raja signed away his independence.

But this move on the part of the English precipitated hostilities with Burma. The British intended to execute the treaty to make Kachar as their base of operation against the Burmese in Assam. The whole of Assam was, as it were, within the sphere of influence of the Burmese. At that stage when the Burmese "prepared to invade Kachar," the intention on the part of the British of executing a treaty with that principality naturally offended them. H. H. Wilson writes:

"Notwithstanding the intimation of these determinations to the Burmese, they persisted in their purpose of invading Kachar, and thereby provoked the commencement of actual hostilities in that quarter."§

The war was declared by the Governor-General against Burma on 5th March 1824.** And the Treaty with the Raja of Kachar was executed at Buddeerpore on the 6th of March, 1824.††

So from the dates mentioned above, it is quite evident that the Burmese gave no reasonable cause of provocation to the British when they invaded Kachar, because that principality had not been then under the protection of the East India Company.

* *Ibid.*, p. 16.

† *Ibid.*, p. 19.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

** Aitchison's Treaties, 1st. Vol. (1st. Edition of 1863), p. 202.

†† *Ibid.*, p. 79.

From the side of Chittagong, for many years past, the Burmese had been molested. As narrated before, the British Government did not make any reparation or pay any compensation to the Burmese for the losses which they suffered at the hands of Kingberring and other Mug refugees who had found asylum in the Company's territory. It is small wonder then that they should now retaliate and insult the Company's Government in every manner possible. H. H. Wilson writes :*

"Repeated instances of actual aggression had still more distinctly marked either their intention of provoking hostilities, or their indifference as to their occurrence. The chief object of these acts of violence were the elephant hunters in the Company's employ, whom the Burmas seized, and carried off repeatedly, under the pretext that they were within the territories of the king of Ava, a pretext that had never been urged throughout the long series of years, during which the Company's hunters had followed the chase in the jungles and hills of the Eastern frontier. In May 1821, the Burmas carried off from the party employed in the Ramoo hills, the Darogah, the Jemadar, and twenty-three of their men, on whom they inflicted personal severities, and then threw them into confinement at Mungdoo. . . .

...The same system of violences was adopted in another part of the Chittagong district, in order to maintain the pretensions to territorial jurisdiction, equally unfounded with those made upon the elephant grounds of Ramoo, in order to establish the right of the Burmas to the whole extent of the Naf river.......The Burmas claimed the right of levying a toll upon all boats entering the mouth of the river, although upon the British side; and on one occasion in January, 1823, a boat laden with rice having entered the river on the West or British side of the Channel, was challenged by an armed Burman boat, which demanded duty. As the demand was unprecedented, the Mugs, who were British subjects, demurred payment, on which the Burmas fired upon them, killed the manjhee or steersman, and then retired. This outrage was followed by reports of the assemblage of armed men on the Burman side of the river, for the purpose of destroying the villages on the British territory, and in order to provide against such a contingency, as well as to prevent the repetition of any aggression upon the boats trafficking on the Company's side of the river, the military guard at Tek Naf, or the mouth of the Naf, was strengthened from twenty to fifty men, of whom a few were posted on the adjoining island of Shahpuri....

This was resented by the Burmans, and they claimed Shahpuri as belonging to their kingdom. The British authorities did not give a very satisfactory reply, but made a proposal to depute commissioners on the part of either Government to meet, not immediately, but some months afterwards to determine all questions respecting the disputed territory on the borders.

The British authorities not settling the matter at once led the Burmese to occupy Shahpuri by force. This was no doubt an affront to the British which they could not overlook. Accordingly, two companies of a native regiment (20th Infantry) were forwarded from Calcutta. They landed on Shahpuri on the 21st November and did not meet with any resistance from the Burmese.

"A proclamation was distributed at the same time, stating that the only object of the detachment was the re-occupation of the island, and that the intercourse of the people on the frontier should suffer no interruption from their presence. The force left on the spot was two Companies of the 2nd battalion 20th regiment native infantry, and two field pieces, six-pounders, on the stockade at Shahpuri; one company at Tek Naf; and the *Planet*, armed vessel, and three gun-boats, each carrying twelve pounder carronade, were stationed in the Naf.*

* *Ibid.*, pp. 23 *et seq.*

By the re-occupation of the island of Shahpuri, the British prestige was restored. The Burmese at that time were not prepared to go to war with the English. But the military demonstration of the latter no doubt showed them that the British meant war with them.

Lord Amherst, who was the Governor-General of India at this period, was not an expert in military matters like his predecessor. It would seem that to emulate the conduct of the Marquess of Hastings, he was also bent upon war with Burma. He consulted the Commander-in-Chief on the matter. General Sir Edward Paget arrived in India as Commander-in-Chief in the winter of 1822. He had never served in this country before and was not well acquainted with the Company's officers and men. Being an autocrat, he did not like the manly spirit of the Company's officers. In his evidence before the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, given on 8th May, 1839, he said:

"It is perfectly impossible for me (called upon to give evidence here) to conceal from this committee that there is a great spirit of insubordination in the army, at least that I had the opportunity of more particularly seeing, which is the Bengal army. A sort of spirit of independence prevails amongst the officers, which is totally inconsistent with our ideas of military discipline."

He wanted the officers to be cringing, subservient tools in his hands. It was he who should be held responsible for the Barrackpore Mutiny which resulted in the deliberate massacre of several hundreds of innocent sepoys. With that egotism and self-sufficiency which characterised Sir Edward Paget, it does not appear that he asked the Company's officers to furnish him with their opinions and advice regarding the Burmese affair.

Of course, he was a military man, and so it was not to be expected that he would give any advice which would preserve peaceful relations with the Burmese. No, he was for war, which is the royal road to fortune, honor and glory for military men.

Unfortunately Amherst and his council also listened to the counsels of the Commander-in-Chief, and so arrangements were adopted for carrying on the war with the Burmese. Sir E. Paget suggested that the course of operations on the frontier should be defensive, that is, for the protection of the British provinces, and expulsion of the Burmese from the territories which they had wrested from the native princes of Assam, while the offensive system should be an attack by sea on the Burmese coast.

According to the plan of operations recommended by the Commander-in-Chief, a large force was despatched to the frontier. No formal declaration of war had as yet been made by the British Government. So the plausible excuse for the despatch of the large force to the frontier was to render assistance to the Raja of Kachar. It has been pointed out before that the treaty with the Raja of Kachar was not concluded till the 6th of March, 1824, while the despatch of troops was taking place towards the close of the year 1823.

A brush of the British force with the Burmese who had invaded Kachar was inevitable.

Ibid., pp. 30-31.

The Burman armies entered Kachar in different directions and it was considered necessary to resist their progress, before they occupied positions which would give them the command of the Sylhet frontier. Without making any representations to, or remonstrance with the Burmese, the civil authority on the frontier of Assam advised the British officers to oppose the advance of the Burmese by force, and so hostilities ensued.

Before the declaration of war, and without sufficient *causus belli* for, as said above, the East India Company had not executed any treaty with the Raja of Kachar, the British took the offensive and were guilty of the breach of friendly relations which till then existed between the Governments of Ava and India. Irritated by the conduct of the British, and smarting under the provocations which the Burmese Government had been receiving at their hands for a number of years, they perhaps did not show that diplomatic etiquette towards the representatives of the East India Company, which international laws enjoin on every state.

After the withdrawal of the British detachment from the island of Shahpuri in January 1824, the Bengal Government deputed Mr. Robertson and Captain Cheap to meet any persons whom the Burmese government might depute to define and settle the boundary. They had arrived at Tek Naf when the Raja of Arracan sent four persons to meet them. The Burmese envoys very reasonably urged as a preliminary condition of the Conference that the island in dispute should be allowed to be considered as neutral, and to be occupied by neither power. This reasonable demand of the Burmese was not attended to by the British authorities, and hence the Burmese envoys returned to their own country, without settling the disputed boundary.

The Burmese authorities seized Mr. Chew, the commander of the *Sophia,* a pilot vessel which had been sent after the withdrawal of the detachment from Shahpuri, to serve as a substitute for the troops removed from that island. Mr. Chew, with some of the native seamen, was taken prisoner to Arrakan, and as a condition for his release, the Burmese authorities asked for the chief Mug refugees to be delivered to them. He was kept at Arrakan from the 20th January to 13th February, when he was sent back.

This arrest of a British officer formed the chief ground on the part of the English for the declaration of hostilities against the Burmese.

The British had been making preparations for the war since some time past, and now without demanding any explanation or reparation from the Burmese for their conduct in seizing Mr. Chew and native seamen, they declared war with Burma. The Governor-General in Council issued a long declaration, dated 24th February 1824, the text of which is inserted in full in Mill and Wilson's History of India, Vol. IX. p. 397 *et seq.*

Regarding this war, Major Archer, (*Tours in Upper India, and in parts of the Himalaya Mountains,*) wrote* :

"The Ava war, entered upon in all the hurry of fear, was of course not guided by judgment, either in the plan of operations or the most fitting time for commencing them. But I will not here

* Vol. II, p. 298.

repeat the absurdity which characterised the doings of the Indian Government, which with all the good nature of fancied over-strength, gratuitously told the Burmese of the intended attack: and in the extensive preparations of some months gave the enemy ample time to make the best defence in his power. If ever the bull was taken by the horns, it was on this occasion."

We agree with the above-named author in thinking that the war was unnecessary. He writes :*

"It may be deemed a bold assertion, that the war was wholly unnecessary, especially with respect to the circumstances of responsibility and importance which accompanied it from the commencement to the termination. In the first place, the Government was most profoundly ignorant of the country, its resources, and its means of offence and defence; and the only authority upon which it built the structure of its policy, was the narrative of 'Symes's Embassy to Ava' and the reminiscences of an officer who had accompanied it. To the latter, implicit confidence was yielded and vast influential authority delegated; but it was quickly perceived that he several points of information gathered in the previous visit to Ava, were not of the slightest use in the present state of affairs; and the utmost of the knowledge acquired sufficed only to take the fleet abreast of the town of Rangoon.

Captain Canning's report, which has already been referred to before, misled the Indian Government respecting the military strength and fighting capacity of the Burmese. In fact, that officer had urged the Government to go to war with Burma, and had represented that such a war would not be attended with any difficulties for the British.†

The plan of operations sketched by the Commander in-Chief was pursued and troops were despatched to the frontier by road and to Rangoon by sea. The high-caste Bengal sepoys, to whom crossing the sea meant excommunication, were not sent to Rangoon. But the Madras sepoy, not so scrupulous about caste, was made use of for this purpose.

Sir Thomas Munro was the Governor of Madras at this time, and was asked to make all the necessary arrangements to equip and dispatch troops to Rangoon. He himself admitted in a letter to the Duke of Wellington, dated Madras, 18th September, 1824:

"I was probably more surprised at hearing of the intended war than people at home will be;

* *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 301.

† When the war was finally decided upon, Captain Canning was consulted as to the best mode of conducting it. In a memorandum, dated Government House, March 4th, 1824, he advised the plan of advancing entirely by water. But some of the points discussed in his paper were not approved of by Sir Thomas Munro, to whom the paper was forwarded by Lord Amherst for perusal and opinion. In his letter to the Governor-General dated, Madras, 21st March 1824, Sir Thomas Munro wrote:

"I should certainly place more dependence on the ultimate success of an attack by Munnipoor than by Rangoon, because, though it may require more time, yet regular troops possess greater advantages against irregulars in acting by land than by water; and the success of their operations is not left to depend on their finding a sufficient number of boats."

Thus it will be noticed that the plan of operation recommended by Munro was diametrically opposed to that of the Commander-in-chief. Of course, Munro was a better and more trustworthy authority on all matters pertaining to India than Sir Edward Paget. Had Munro's advice been followed, much of the expense incurred on the war, would have been saved.

for I never had the least suspicion that we were to go to war with the king of Ava, till a letter reached the Presidency, in February last, asking us what number of troops we could furnish for foreign service. I thought that the local officers of Chittagong and Arracan might have carried on their petty aggressions on both frontiers for another year, and that they would probably have got tired and settled matters among themselves."*

The second sentence of the above extract clearly shows how unjustifiable was the war which the Indian Government had declared against the Burmese.

Munro did what he had been ordered to do by the Supreme Government. However, he gave a piece of advice which the Governor-General would have done well to act upon. In his letter to Lord Amherst, dated Madras, 25th February, 1824, he wrote:

"The distance between Calcutta and Madras making it nearly a month before an answer can be received to a letter, renders all sudden operations, in which the forces of both Presidencies are to co-operate, extremely liable to accidents, because there is no time for consultation or explanation; and under such circumstances, no operations are so liable to failure as maritime expeditions. A service of this kind requires, more than any other, that every equipment should be ample, because there can seldom be any medium between complete success and failure; partial success is little better than an expensive failure.

* * * * *

"I must own, with the little information which I can be supposed to possess, I should think it better to avoid all inferior expeditions, to wait until we are fully prepared for the main one, and to undertake it with such a force as should leave no doubt of success. This would give time for the two Governments to communicate freely, and for the subordinate one to understand exactly what it was to do, and to make its arrangements accordingly; and it would be more likely, in the end, both to ensure success and to save expense. The occasional hostilities on the eastern frontier of Bengal might, perhaps, still be allowed to continue for some months without much serious inconvenience; and even if the Burmans brought a greater force to that quarter, it might divert their attention from the main object of the attack."†

But Amherst turned a deaf ear to the sound and wholesome advice of Munro. His Lordship replied to Munro's letter on 10th March, 1824:

"You have stated many reasons, which I acknowledge to be powerful ones, why the expedition should be deferred till further communication can be held between this place and Madras. I think they are overbalanced, not only by the consideration of the proper period for ascending the Irrawaddy River, and the impossibility of moving from Rangoon to Ummerapoora by land, but also by the security which an early blow would afford to our eastern frontier, and by a reference to the unprepared state in which we may expect to find the enemy."

So Munro had to obey the order of the Governor-General and arranged to send from Madras to Rangoon three regiments of Europeans and ten battalions of Native infantry. This was far in excess of what Amherst had considered necessary for the occupation of Rangoon. In the course of the letter from which an extract has been given above, his lordship wrote:

We contemplate an attack on Rangoon as soon as it can be made; and have no reason to doubt that four or five thousand men will be sufficient for its capture and occupation. Of these we may be able to furnish from hence nearly three thousand. We should not require, therefore, from Madras, above two thousand native troops; with European and native artillery; and I should hope

* Gleig's Life of Sir Thomas Munro, 2nd Vol. (1831), pp. 220-222.
† *Ibid.*, p. 225.

that these may be ready to sail from Madras by the 15th April,—say the whole reaches the rendezvous by the 1st of May. During the first week in that month they may be in possession of Rangoon."

Munro erred on the right side in sending a larger force than what Lord Amherst had asked for.

The Madras troops were placed under charge of Colonel McBean, who was granted the rank and allowances of a Brigadier-General.

The force by land had already been despatched to the frontier some months previously, where the operations were proposed to be limited to the protection of the British provinces and the expulsion of the Burmese from Assam. It was not considered advisable to immediately invade Arakan.

General Sir Archibald Campbell, a brother of Lord Combermere, was selected to to the chief command of the expedition, with Captain Canning as political agent.

The place of rendezvous selected for the two divisions of troops from the presidencies of Bengal and Madras was Port Cornwallis. Here the Bengal division, which were embarked at Calcutta between the 12th and 17th of April 1824, arrived at the end of that month. The greater portion of the Madras division arrived on the 4th of May. Orders were given for the sailing of the fleet the following morning, which on the 10th instant anchored within the bar of the Rangoon river.

The capture of Rangoon was not attended with much difficulty, as the place was not fortified and the Burmese authorities were not prepared for the British fleet. H. H. Wilson writes:

"At the river gate is a landing place, denominated the King's Wharf, in which situation the principal battery was placed, and opposite to which the *Liffey* came to anchor about two P. M. After a short pause, a fire was opened on the fleet, but was very soon silenced by the guns of the frigate. In the meantime, three detachments were landed from the transports of his Majesty's 38th regiment, under Major Evans, above the town, and his Majesty's 41st, under Colonel Mc Bean below it, whilst Major Sale, with the light infantry of the 13th, was directed to attack the river gate, and carry the main battery. These measures were successful. The Burmas fled from the advance of the troops and in less than twenty minutes the town was in the undisputed possession of the British." . . .

"Upon taking possession of Rangoon, it was found to be entirely deserted. The news of the arrival of the fleet had scarcely reached the town, when the population began to depart, and to secrete themselves in the adjacent thickets."*

It was not on physical force alone, that is powder and shot and the sword, that the British depended for their success against the Burmese. No, they leaned more on the Machiavelian doctrines, to achieve their end. In his letter dated from Calcutta, 2nd April, 1824, Amherst wrote to Munro:

"The Siamese, inveterate enemies of the Burmese, would cause a most powerful diversion in the South. The aid to be derived from the Siamese, in the event of protracted hostilities, has entered deeply into our calculation. But I am not disposed, if we can possibly avoid it, to engage too largely in the intrigues and politics of the Indo-Chinese nations, or to enter into engagements which we are not prepared at all hazards to fulfill. . . . I am not at all sure that the dismemberment of

* *Loc. cit.*, pp. 68-69.

the Burmese empire, even if we had the means of effecting it, is an event to be desired. The balance is now tolerably equal between them and the Siamese, and they help to keep each other in order. The only tribe to which we have yet held out hopes of independence is the Assamese. . . it is highly desirable on every account that they should no longer remain subject to the Burmese yoke."

What eould not be effected by force of arms was to be accomplished by means of Machiavelian policy. The British had thought that the capture of Rangoon would make the King of Ava sue for peace; and hence they had not made all those preparations which otherwise they would have done. Major Snodgrass writes:

"The arrival of a British fleet at Rangoon seems to have been wholly unexpected by the Court of Ava; the town was unprepared for its reception, and the civil and military authorities thrown into alarm and consternation . . . it was, therefore, most desirable that no time should be lost in appearing before the town, which we sanguinely hoped would, byaccepting of protection, at once place at our disposal the resources of the country in cattle, boats, drivers, and boatmen with which we were wholly unprovided. In boats especially, Rangoon was known to be well supplied; and it was by many anticipated, that should the king of Ava upon the capture of the chief commercial city, still refuse to make atonement for his wanton and unprovoked aggressions that city would afford the means of pushing up the river a force sufficient to subdue the capital and bring the war at once to a conclusion."*

But the British met with disappointment. Machiavelian policy, for a time at least, met with no success. To quote the same author again:

"It has already been observed that the army came unprovided with the necessary equipment for advancing either by land and water; indeed it was anticipated that the capture of Rangoon alone,......would induce the King of Ava to make overtures for peace, ...or at all events, that the country would afford sufficient water transport to enable a considerable corps to proceed up the Irawaddy towards the capital; ... nor were the reasons upon which these expectations of aid and assistance from the natives were founded without some weight. It was urged that they were not Burmese, but Peguers and a conquered people, living under the tyrannical sway of a Government with which they had for centuries, and often successfully, waged war, deprived of their court, and governed by despotic and mercenary chiefs, whom they obeyed from fear alone; represented† as discontented with their present situation, and ever longing for their former independence and finally, that they would easily be induced to join the invading force, and to aid it, by every means in their power in humbling the tyrant, under whose arbitrary rule they had so long suffered every species of degradation. But in these calculations, the well considerated power and judicious policy of the Government towards its conquered provinces were overlooked, and the warlike and haughty character of the nation was so imperfectly known, that no correct judgment could be formed of our probable reception."§

No, the Burmese, paying allegiance to Buddha, were not tyrants nor intolerant to votaries of other creeds, as they had been represented by Christians. Of the spirit

* Narrative of the Burmese War, pp. 4 and 5. But Snodgrass is not a trustworthy historian. Thus an officer writing on *"A few recollections of the Ava campaign in 1824-25-26,"* *in the Meerut Universal Magazine* (Vol. I, pp. 60 *et. seq.*) says:

"The official Reporters were all personally interested in the War being continued; nor can the historians of that campaign be considered altogether impartial."

"Snodgrass (who left Calcutta with the expedition as Adjutant of the 38th) was *Post Master, Prize Agent, Military Secretary, Political Assistant* and *Son-in-law*, and merely published a *Puff* on the family performances, civil and military."

† Or, rather, misrepresented.
§ Snodgrass's Narrative, pp. 17-18.

Armour worn by Maha Bandoo a

Maha Bandoola

William Pitt, Lord Amherst

of toleration in religious matters of the Burmese, the above-quoted author writes :

"Rangoon contains an Armenian and Portuguese church ; a strong proof of liberality of sentiment in the Government, and of freedom from intolerance and religious prejudice in the people."*

So the appeal of the Christian British to the Buddhist inhabitants of Rangoon to throw off the yoke of their lawful sovereign and seek their protection was in vain. The Burmese were not cowards and altogether devoid of military tactics. They did exactly what the Muscovites did when their country was invaded by Napoleon. From the neighbourhood of Rangoon the Burmese authorities had carefully removed everything that was likely to be of use to the British army. To quote the above-mentioned author :

Hid from our view on every side in the darkness of a deep, and, to regular bodies, impenetrable forest, far beyond which the inhabitants and all the cattle of the Rangoon district had been driven, the Burmese chiefs carried on their operations, and matured their future schemes with vigilance, secrecy, and activity. Neither rumour nor intelligence of what was passing within his posts ever reached us. Beyond the invisible line which circumscribed our position, all was mystery or vague conjecture."

Placed in these circumstances, it was difficult for the British to succeed. The Burmese were born soldiers and were given to guerilla warfare, of which the formation and defence of stockades formed the chief feature. These constructed in the most difficult and inaccessible recesses of the jungle which covered the greater part of the face of their country, were the means by which they carried on nightly attacks on the British forces, which greatly annoyed and inconvenienced the latter.

While the British force was in such a critical position in Rangoon, the state of affairs in Assam and the Arrakan frontier was no better. The British were acting on the Machiavelian policy in Assam. H. H. Wilson writes :

"On entering Assam, a proclamation was addressed to the inhabitants, encouraging them with the prospect of being released from the cruelty of their Burman invaders and assuring them of British protection. Several of the barbarous tribes in the eastern portion of Assam, as the Khamtis and Singphos, availed themselves of the unsettled state of affairs to harass the Burmas, but their operations were equally directed against the unfortunate natives of Assam, numbers of whom were carried off by them as slaves. The Assamese displayed the most favorable disposition towards the British, but their unwarlike character, scanty numbers, and reduced means, rendered their co-operation of no value."†

The King of Ava placed a large force under the famous commander, Maha Mengyee Bundoola, who had established his head-quarters at Arrakan. This force, it is said, was composed of between ten and twelve thousand Burmese. In the beginning of May, a portion of this force, crossing the Naf, advanced to Rutnapullung, a place fourteen miles south of Ramoo.

On hearing of the advent of the Burmese force, the British also sent a detachment under the command of one Captain Norton to fight the Burmese. So, not far from Ramoo an encounter with the Burmese took place, in which the British were defeated.

* *Ibid.*, p. 14.

† Narrative of the Burmese War, p. 48.

The officer commanding the detachment was killed. The casualty list on the side of the British was a heavy one.

This defeat of the British at the hands of the Burmese produced a great panic in Calcutta, in fact throughout the British possessions in India. It was thought by many not impossible that the enemy might penetrate through the Sunderbunds to Calcutta. Major Archer in his work, which has been already referred to before, writes:

"The Supreme Government was actually afraid of a Burmese invasion of Calcutta, by way of the Sunderbunds, and accordingly ordered an European regiment down the river for further protection."*

This defeat of the British created a great sensation in India, as may be gathered from the paper which Metcalfe transmitted to the Governor-General, June 8, 1824, a few extracts from which are given below:

"Our great success in India has induced the systematic habit of despising our enemies, and thence we are liable to disasters and reverses from which otherwise we might be preserved by the actual magnitude of our power and extent of our resources.

"Our Indian Empire is owing solely to our superiority in arms. It rests entirely on that foundation. It is undermined by every reverse, however trifling, and would not long withstand any serious indication of weakness.

"All India is at all times looking out for our downfall. The people everywhere would rejoice, ... at our destruction : and numbers are not wanting who would promote it by all means in their power. Our ruin, if it be ever commenced, will probably be rapid and sudden ... From the pinnacle to the abyss might be but one step.

"The fidelity of our native army, on which our existence depends, depends itself on our continued success. . . .

"The Burmans have commenced the war with us in a manner which perhaps was little expected. They have the advantage of first success, and we have the disadvantage of disaster, which is likely, in however small a degree it may have taken place, to be of worse consequence to us than it would be to any other power in the world, because unremitting success is almost necessary for our existence......

"It is evident that we have an insufficiency of troops within any moderate distance of the scene of invasion, and that the progress of the enemy has carried alarm to Dacca and even to Calcutta, where alarm has not been felt from an external enemy since the time of Surajah Doula and the Black Hole.

"We are engaged in a contest with the Burmans on the whole length of the Eastern frontier of our Bengal possessions. Our enemies appear not to be deficient in either spirit or numbers ; and we must bring numbers as well as spirit to oppose them.......there is real danger to our whole Empire in India from the slightest reverse at any point whatever, if it be not speedily and effectually repaired. The intelligence spreads like wild fire, and immediately excites the hopes and speculations of the millions whom we hold in subjugation......Let us put forth our strength to prevent further misfortune, and crush the evil before it be fraught with more extensive injury and greater peril."

The British tried in right earnest to repair the disaster which befell them at Ramoo. A greater number of troops, with more ammunition and other military stores, was despatched to the Frontier. But during the continuance of the rains, owing to the inereased sickness of the men, the British force was compelled to retreat to Bhadarpur, where it

* Loc. cit., p. 299.

remained inactive. The Burmese also were unable to move out of their entrenchment, to which they were confined by the rise of the rivers.

H. H. Wilson has censured the generalship of Bundula for not taking advantage of the victory of Ramoo and pushing on to Calcutta. He writes:

"Neither was much to be apprehended from the generalship that suffered the victory of Ramoo to pass away without making the slightest demonstration of a purpose to improve a crisis of such splendid promise, and which restricted the fruits of a battle gained to the construction of a stockade."

Here Wilson has suppressed a material fact which will account for Bundula's not pursuing the British forces in their retreat from Ramoo. He (Bundula) had been apprised of the capture of Rangoon by the British and so in hot haste he moved to that port town for its recovery. Major Archer writes:

"Bundoolah, the Burmese Chieftain, was in Arracan with a large force, advancing upon the Company's territories, but, hearing of the capture of Rangoon, he hastened to the scene of action, leaving orders for his army to follow with all speed.'.*

The Burman empire was not so rich as the British Government of India. Unlike the latter, the King of Ava could not afford to spend money like water. Of course, the British Government of India was spending money wrung out of an alien people with which that Government had very little sympathy. Therefore there was small wonder that the Burmese Government could not send more officers and men to oppose the large hordes with whom the British had invaded their country. Under the circumstances, it is hardly fair to charge the Burmese Commander with bad generalship.†

It has been said above that the British Government had to send more troops to the seats of war to oppose the Burmese, who had been elated by their successes. It has been the policy of the British Government in India to treat the native troops as mercenaries. To them do not belong the honor and glory of war.

* *Loc. cit.*, p. 305.

† It would seem from all accounts available that Bundula was anxious to pursue the fugitive British force to Bengal. In fact, that had been his cherished dream ever since he conquered Assam and made it part of the Burman Empire. Thornton (*History of the British Empire in India*, Vol. V, pages 95-96, footnote) writes:

"Mr. John Laird, a native of Scotland, who resided several years in the Burmese dominions for commercial purposes, made the following statement to Mr. Cranford:—'When I was in Ava, for the second time, in 1823, I was present at an evening levee of the king. The late Bundoola and several of his officers, who had just arrived from the conquest of Assam, were there. . . . . Bundoola said, 'I pursued the fugitives across the Brahmapooter into the British territory: but as the English are on terms of friendship with your Majesty, and you derive a large revenue from their trade to Rangoon, I retired. But if your Majesty desires to have Bengal, I will conquer it for you, and will only require for this purpose the *kulas*, or strangers, and not a single Burman." So confident was the Bundoola of being able to perform what he suggested, that according to a statement of Major Snodgrass, he marched into Arracan, provided with golden fetters, in which the Governor-General of India was to be led captive to Ava."

The victory of Ramoo seemed to realise his long-cherished dream. But then, as a faithful servant, he had to obey the orders of his sovereign.

CHAPTER LXIII

THE BARRACKPORE MASSACRE

Although it was the Native Indian army with whose help the British succeeded in building up their Empire in India, yet it is a fact that the sepoy has been for long ill-treated in many ways and never treated sufficiently well by his foreign masters. It is not necessary here to dilate on the many virtues possessed by the swarthy and 'heathen' sepoy. These have been borne testimony to by all those who knew that person well. Almost all of the military witnesses examined before the Select Committee of the House of Commons held in 1832 to enquire into the affairs of India, spoke very highly of the Indian sepoy. Sir Jasper Nicolls, who rose to be the Commander-in-Chief in India answered the question put to him as follows :

"12. What are the habits of the native soldier, is he orderly and easily managed ?—Very much so; his habits are very simple, and he is very easily managed.

"13. How, as compared with Europeen soldiers ?—I think the command of an European regiment would be more difficult than the command of a brigade of sepoys; it would be much easier to control 5,000 sepoys than it would be 1,000 Europeans."

Major General Sir Thomas Reynell, who had served in India from 1805 to 1825, gave, in his evidence, the following character to the sepoys :

"They are subordinate ; they are patient and they are certainly obedient to their orders. I consider them to be animated by a good spirit, and I have had a good opportunity of witnessing it in the late service before Bhurtpure. There I have seen them in the trenches working at very laborious employments, and I believe, contrary to their own religious feelings, . . . I consider them, generally speaking, an efficient army, the Bengal army."

He answered the question,

"271. Now as compared with the European soldier; I mean, as to order and being easily managed ?—I think he is much more orderly than European soldiers in general from the mere circumstance of his not being so given to drink."

According to Major-General Sir Theophilus Pritzler, who had served with the Madras troops,

"There is no greater punishment that you can inflict upon a sepoy than to order him to be discharged."

It would seem that because the Indian sepoy was always a very docile animal, therefore, perhaps he used to be ill-treated. The historian Lecky, in one of his well-known works, has said:

"A people who are submissive gentle, and loyal fall by reason of these very qualities under a despotic government."

It is not necessary here to multiply instances to show the ill-treatment the sepoys have been subjected to. Suffice it to notice the grievances under which the sepoys generally and those of Bengal specially were smarting at the time of the First Burmese War of 1824.

The Bengal troops were, as regards pay, worse off than their comrades of Bombay and Madras. The pay of the former was only five and a half rupees a month, while that of the latter seven rupees. Col. J. Munro, in his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons held in 1832 to inquire into the affairs of the East India Company, answered the question,

"1043. Is that difference a matter of complaint or discontent?—— . . . I have understood that the Bengal sepoys on some occasions have stated as a grievance, the superior pay received at all times by the Bombay and Madras sepoys."

Even in 1832, the pay of the sepoy compared with the wages of labour and price of subsistence was not very high. Sir Jasper Nicolls, in his evidence before the Committee referred to, answered the question,

"17. How is that (the pay of the sepoy) compared with the wages of labour and the price of subsistence?—The lowest servant of any officer gets four rupees, some as high as twenty, *so that in fact it is very low compared with servants;*" . .

The same officer in answering the question to specify the particular advantages of Madras and Bombay over those of Bengal, stated:

"Under the Madras Presidency, upon every removal of a corps, they receive hutting money, eight rupees to a native officer, two to a private sepoy, which allowances are unknown in Bengal. The Madras sepoy is never more than 15 days in arrear, and if he is ordered to move after the 24th of any month, he is paid to the end of it: the Bengal sepoy a month and a half in arrear. The Madras sepoy, when grain exceeds a given sum, receives the difference for himself and the family from the Government. Native officers are very handsomely rewarded for meritorious actions, by extra pensions (for they are all entitled to pensions), grants of land, horses occasionally for cavalry service. Palanquins and an allowance for their carriage of 70 rupees a month, which is a great advantage and an honour; which allowances are unknown, with few exceptions, in Bengal. There are 70 recruit and pension boys upon each regiment; 30 recruit boys and 40 pension boys, children of soldiers, borne upon the strength of each corps at Madras; this is unknown in Bengal....

"There is a native adjutant to each battalion at Madras, which is certainly a benefit: promotion is very much quicker, and they are sent at an earlier period of life to the invalid corps or pension list, which though not a personal is a general advantage to that army. Bombay has also the same establishment of recruit and pension boys; the sepoys receive their full pay on furlough monthly, wherever they are, which the Bengal sepoys do not. They receive a higher rate of pension; they receive for their clothing, I think, three articles in two years, whereas the Bengal sepoy receives only two articles in two years. The Bombay sepoy, when he marches under command, receives nine and a half rupees a month; the Bengal sepoy eight and a half. The Bombay sepoy when he marches receives his *batta* three days before he sets out under command, and the Bengal sepoy on the day he sets out. *They are apparent trifles, but they are very important to a sepoy.* No deductions are made from the Bombay sepoy, who has had leave of absence, when he returns to his corps; from the Bengal sepoy there are. The Bombay sepoy receives presents on Christmas day, New Year's day and the King's birth-day; the Bengal sepoy does not. The Bombay sepoy, in taking up a new cantonment, receives two rupees; the non-commissioned officer four, the jemmadar 12, the subdar 24; the Bengal officer nothing. The Bombay sepoy, on changing quarters, receives half the above allowance; the Bengal sepoy nothing. From the Bombay sepoy no deduction is made when he is in the hospital; from the Bengal sepoy one anna per day. The Bombay sepoy receives a coat every year, pantaloons every third year; the Bengal sepoy receives a coat and pair of pantaloons alternately. Thus the Bombay sepoy receives three coats and a pair of pantaloons in three years, and the Bengal sepoy two coats and a pair of pantaloons, or a pair of pantaloons

and a coat. The Bombay sepoy receives two yards of nankeen, a pair of sandals and cloth for a turban every year, which is unknown in Bengal. The knapsacks for the Bombay sepoys are found by the Government, not so with the Bengal."

So then it is clear that the Bengal sepoys had legitimate grievances against the Indian Government. But the sepoys as a class were not so fairly treated as the European troops then serving in India. The native sepoy did not receive any bounty on enlistment as did the British recruit. Then again, while the European soldier was provided with barracks in the cantonment, the native sepoy had to shift for himself, and to make his own hut.

Captain Balamain in his letter dated 31st March, 1832, to Mr. Villiers, published in the appendix to the Fifth Report from the Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 16th August, 1832, wrote:

"The European soldier is very well provided for in every respect and his situation, on the whole, is probably more comfortable than that of the private in any other country. The men ought only to be enlisted for a term of years."

But he could not give such a rosy accouut of the situation of the native sepoy, regarding whom he wrote:

"The native soldiery in the Company's service is composed of men of a great variety of country, caste and disposition. . . .They are easily managed by gentle treatment, but quite unnerved by harshness. . . .They are very sensible of disgrace or injury, particularly the Mahomedans. . . . The fear of being hastily punished by some young officer, or of being flogged for some purely military offence, prevents many men from entering the service; and it is remarked that of late years few native officers place their sons in the army. There is, I fear, no great attachment to the service. The causes of this are numerous. The prominent one, almost an unavoidable one, is the depression of the whole native solidery. In an army of between 200,000 and 300,000 men, no native can rise above the rank of subadar-major, about equal to troop serjeant-major. There are many men of talent, more of spirit and and ambition among them and these can never be satisfied with such a state of things; they have not only their own feelings to contend with, but they are continually taunted and excited by their countrymen not in the service. Could any safe opening, however small, be made for the advancement to higher office of some of the natives, it would have a most beneficial effect. Among the lesser causes of discontent are the frequent changes in dress and drill: the great strictness in little points of etiquette; the curtailment of liberty when off duty; the irregularity of relief of corps; the insults of the European soldiery; they being most frequently placed under the command of officers not acquainted with their manners and customs, and often regardless of them. . . . The insults of the European soldiery have increased from the more frequent reliefs of His Majesty's regiments. It originates in the ignorance of, and contempt for, what the men call "black fellows" and is chiefly felt by them on their first arrival. Thirty years ago, there was no such thing as the hanging of European soldiers for shooting natives, which is now so common: nor is there such a sight now to be seen as European and native soldiers walking arm in arm, and frequenting each other's barracks and tents, as used then to be the case."

Other eminent officers also gave evidence to the same effect. Thus, to quote Major-General Sir H. Worsley on the subject; in his letter dated 30th March, 1832, to Mr, Villiers, he wrote:

"For the purposes of service or war I should deem it very desirable to have a larger proportion of troops armed and organized as light infantry. Nor can I omit the opportunity for observing, that

I have always considered the musket in general use for the infantry as cruelly heavy, burthensome and unwieldy for that country, when it is recollected that the native soldier's inferior stamina is moreover loaded with a pouch calculated to carry 60 rounds of balled cartridges (40 would be abundant for every occasion), a heavy laden knapsack containing all his necessaries, often including cooking utensil ; . . .

"With regard to the pay and allowances of the Native soldiers, it is at this day the very same in amount as when it was first fixed, which was in so early a period of our establishment in that country, that in a code of Pay Regulations, published by the Military Auditor-General in 1810, it is stated, that the same rates as therein stated of pay and *batta* have been always passed to the native troops but that no record of the authority establishing them in the first instance is anywhere to be found."

In the footnote to the above, he adds :

"Nor do the Native troops ever receive any bounty on enlistment, whilst on every relief or change of situation they have to provide quarters at their own expense."

Then Sir H. Worsley proceeds :

"It may be safely assumed that since the early period of time in question, all necessaries of of food and raiment have risen from 50 to 100 per cent. 2ndly, that the country then occupied was bounded by the Currumnassah River, progressively extended to the Vizier's dominions, and now bounded by the river Sutledge and the deserts of Bikaneer ; and that in like manner have the labours and duties and the wear and tear consequent on distant marches, in peace as well as in war, proportionately increased, with expense and inconvenience enhanced in many cases where water carriage cannot be employed for the conveyance of the baggage, families, etc., of the troops.

"It will be no disparagement of any other troops to say, that hitherto the native army of India has never been surpassed for fidelity to the Government, and attachment to their officers ; nor 'yielded to those of any other nation in point of discipline and effective valour.' But it is, I fear, too true, that there is, in some respect, a falling off from its former excellence, as regards the inclination to enter the service on the part of the same respectable classes that formerly sought it with avidity ; nor does the same spirit of contentment and satisfaction seem to prevail. They seem to have lost much of their characteristic purity and simplicity of manners by which their moral and military virtues were formerly enhanced. They are, nevertheless, the most orderly, respectful and obedient soldiers in the world ; and I fervently trust and hope they will not fail to continue so to the end of time provided their habits and prejudices are duly attended to ; by which their attachment and fidelity has hitherto been secured, and a lesson taught to after ages, 'that their lives may be commanded through the medium of their affections'."

The European troops in India always had a good time of it. They were pampered and they almost did next to nothing. Thus Lieutenant-Colonel Baker wrote in the letter dated 29th February, 1832, to Mr. Villiers:

"That in Bengal, except in time of war or on actual service, or for the political purpose of overawing the native army, they (the European troops) are entirely useless to the Government for the ordinary duties of the country. They perform no duties that can be possibly avoided, or which involve any exposure to the climate. The Governor-General's and the Commander-in-Chief's guards are solely furnished by the native regiments. Even in Fort William but half the main guard is supplied by his Majesty's regiments in garrison there, to furnish the covered sentries, *i. e.*, in the shade of some building, veranda or gateway. Even the orderly to carry the adjutants' orderly-book is a native soldier from Barrackpore. On a' march in Bengal, a regiment of His Majesty's dragoons or infantry must have a detachment of native infantry (generally a company under an English officer) to perform most of their duties for them in camp."

The native troops had many grievances and were labouring under many disadvantages. But no one ever bestowed a thought to redress the former or remove the latter. It would be no exaggeration to say that year after year their grievances and disabilities increased rather than in any way diminished. During the Burmese War, as more troops were needed for the front, one of the native infantry regiments stationed at Barrackpur, namely, the 47th, was ordered for the service. Of course, the sepoys had to obey the orders. But it was the bounden duty of the authorities to see whether it was possible for the sepoys to obey those orders. They should have attended to the comforts of the sepoys, towards whom cold and unsympathetic was their attitude. But they did nothing of the sort. The native soldiers had to pay for their transport whenever they were ordered to move from one place to another.*

But when the native infantry regiment was ordered from Barrackpur to proceed to the front, it was impossible for it to secure any transport of any sort. The East India Company's historiographer, Thornton, is obliged to write :

"In the instance under notice, however, no bullocks could be provided, none could be hired, and they could only be purchased at an extravagant price. An application for assistance from the commissariat department was made, but was answered by an intimation that the men must provide the required accommodation for themselves."

Of course, this was impossible ; the Commanding Officer of the regiment, Colonel

* Thornton's *History of British India,* vol v, page 105. He writes :

"The European does not carry even his knapsack. The sepoy is not excused from this burden but in addition to ordinary necessaries, he must find means of conveyance for a set of utensils for cooking, with which each man is provided and these added to his clothing, appointments and ammunition, would constitute a load which the comparatively slender frames of the native troops would be altogether unable to bear through a lengthened march, more especially if it were to be performed, as most frequently happen, under unfavourable circumstances. Carriage-cattle are, for this reason, of prime necessity for the movement of an army ; but it is to be observed that *the expense of these animals, and their drivers, so far as employed for the use of the sepoys, had been accustomed to be defrayed by the sepoys themselves.*"

That the sepoy's knapsack was a curse even in the year of grace 1858, will be evident from what Sir Mark Cubbon, K. C. B., Commissioner for the Government of the territories of his Highness the Rajah of Mysore, wrote in his letter dated Bangalore, July 24, 1858, to Colonel Durand. He wrote :

"The present musket is good enough, though it would be better if it were somewhat lighter. But the sepoy does not complain of the weight of his present musket, his great grievance is his present knapsack ; relieve him of that and he will consider it as great a boon conferred upon him, as if the Government had given him a considerable increase of pay. When the knapsack was first introduced into the Madras army, it was a small and convenient pack ; the present knapsack or its like was introduced in 1817, and it is the curse of the native army. More men have been invalided and pensioned from the chest-foundering action of the knapsack than ever would have been from the ordinary risks of the service. The knapsack is looked upon as the bore of the service, and were it to be removed altogether, it is certain that the sepoys of the whole army would greet the measure as a great boon, and the service would instantly become much more popular than it has recently been and plenty of recruits would be found ; why should not this be done at once ?"—P. 106 of *Papers connected with the Re-organization of the Army in India* presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1859.

Cartwright, spent money from his private funds for the purchase of transport animals. At that moment, the Government also advanced money for the same purpose. But then it was too late. The disease had passed the stage of the application of any correct remedy.

It was given out that the regiment would be transported by sea from Calcutta to Rangoon. The men in the regiment - all high-caste Hindus—had not enlisted for service in countries to which they could not march. It does not appear that any steps were taken to remove this impression (assuming it to have been a false one) from the minds of the sepoys. In the petition which they presented to the military authorities, to which reference will be made presently, they stated this to be the ground of their complaint and grievance.

The regiment was ordered to parade on the 30th October, 1824, in marching order. The men appeared without their knapsacks. The explanation which they offered was that their knapsacks were old and worn-out ones, not fit to be used. They stated their grievances, which were not unreasonable. They said, they would not proceed to Rangoon or anywhere by sea, as that was not in the bond which they had executed : and if they were to be sent to the front, they should be granted extra allowances or double *Batta*, as they called it, which claim they based on the grounds, first, that increased pay had been given to bullock-drivers and persons engaged in similar services ; secondly, that according to report everything was very dear in the country to which they were ordered to proceed.

No measures were adopted to conciliate them or to remove their causes of discontent. But the parade was dismissed and the commanding officer sought the advice of the general officer commanding at Barrackpur, who proceeded to Calcutta to consult the then Commander-in-Chief, General Paget.

As the result of the deliberations of these higher authorities, two British infantry regiments, *viz.*, His Majesty's 1st Royals and 47th, a corps of artillery, and a troop of the Governor-General's body-guard were brought from Calcutta to Barrackpur, and the disaffected regiment was ordered to parade on the 1st November, when the men found themselves surrounded by the British troops.

They had forwarded to the Commander-in-Chief a memorial stating their grievances. This document was written in the vernacular and was translated, it seems not quite correctly, by the Persian interpreter. In it they wrote :

"The case is this :—The soubahdar major and havildar major told the sepoys, &c., they were going to Rangoon, and would be embarked on board ship, and he told all the sepoys that when the Company went to war they ought not to shrink. After this the soubahdar major and havildar major sent for four men from each company, and said, 'those who wear the *takee khoo* ought not to cast it off. This also they ought not to do.' The sepoys replied, that they never could put their feet on board ship, and that no person would forfeit his caste. For this reason all the sepoys swore by the Ganges water and *toolsee,* that they never would put their feet in a ship ; and every gentleman knows that when a Hindoo takes Ganges water and *toolsee* in his hand, he will sacrifice his life. In this way the regiment, &c., pledged themselves. This which is written is our representation. And further, the soubahdar and havildar before mentioned went to the commanding officer, Colonel Cartwright, and stated that the regiment was ready to march ; that all the sepoys had

agreed (to march), whereas the sepoys knew nothing of this circumstance. Now, you are master of our lives; what you order we will do; but we will not go on board ship, nor will we march for that purpose. Formerly our name was good, but it has now become bad; our wish is, therefore, that our names be effaced, and that every man may return to his home."

It does not seem that this representation of the sepoys, couched in respectful language, was taken into serious consideration by the Commander-in-Chief or his staff. Had kindness and a conciliatory spirit been shown to them and they had also been assured that they would not be required to embark on board ship for Rangoon, in all probability they would have behaved as all good soldiers ought to do. But to treat the sepoys kindly was not the policy of the European military officers. By the order of the Commander-in-Chief, the sepoys were ruthlessly massacred on the morning of the 1st November. Kaye writes:

"A hard, strict disciplinarian, with no knowledge of the native army, and a bitter prejudice against it, Sir Edward Paget was a man of the very metal to tread down insurrection with an iron heel, regardless both of causes and of consequences. . . . .Some attempt was made at explanation—some attempt at conciliation. But it was feeble and ineffectual: perhaps not understood. They were told, then, that they must consent to march, or to ground their arms. Still not seeing the danger, for they were not told that the artillery guns were loaded with grape, and the gunners ready to fire,* they refused to obey the word; and so the signal for slaughter was given. The guns opened upon them. The mutineers were soon in panic flight. Throwing away their arms and accoutrements, they made for the river. Some were shot down; some were drowned. There was no attempt at battle. None had been contemplated. The muskets with which the ground was strewn were found to be unloaded."†

That this bloodshed, indulged in by the Commander-in-Chief, could have been prevented, will be evident from what Kaye says on this subject:

"A few sentences of well-chosen, well-delivered Hindoostanee, on that fatal November morning might have brought the sepoys back to reason and to loyalty. But they had the benefit of neither wise counsel from within nor kindly *exhortation from without. Deprived, by the reconstruction* of the Army, of the officers whom they had long known and trusted, they were more than ever in need of external counsel to bring them back to a right state of feeling. They wanted a General of Division, such as Malcolm or Ochterlony, to re-awaken their soldierly instincts—their pride in their colours, their loyalty to their salt. But instead of such judicious treatment as would have shown them their own folly, as in a glass, the martinets of the Horse Guards, stern in their unsympathising ignorance, their ruthless prejudices, had, in our own territories, at the very seat of Government, in the presence of no pressing danger, no other lessons to teach, no other remedies to apply, than those which were to be administered at the bayonet's point and the cannon's mouth."§

The demoralising effects of this massacre have been described by the same authority as follows:

"But this display of vigour, though it checked mutiny for the time, tended only to sow broadcast the seeds of future *insubordinations. It created* a bad *moral effect throughout the whole of the* Bengal army. From bazaar to bazaar the news of the massacre ran with a speed almost telegraphic. The regiments, which had already marched to the frontier, were discussing the evil tidings with

* "It is doubtful, indeed, whether they knew that the guns were in the rear of the European regiments."—Kaye.

† Kaye's *History of the Sepoy War*, Vol. I (1870), pp. 268-69.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 270-271.

mingled dismay and disgust before the intelligence, sent by special express, had reached the ears of the British chiefs. 'They are your own men, whom you have been destroying,' said an old native officer ; and he could not trust himself to say more."*

The brutal Commander-in-Chief was not content with mowing down the sepoys by artillery fire. He court-martialed the survivors, when many were hanged. The regiment was afterwards struck out of the Army List.

Thus ended the disgraceful affair of the Barrackpore massacre. Had justice been done, it was the Commander-in-Chief and members of his staff who deserved to be hanged or blown from the mouths of cannon rather than the sepoys. But in this nether world of ours, justice is not always to be had, but might is right.

This wanton massacre of the sepoys forms a dark episode in the history of the Burmese War. There have been many English writers who have not scrupled to add insult to injury by blackening the character of the sepoys. According to them, the refusal of the sepoys to proceed to the front proceeded from fear, cowardice and other similar causes. Thus Metcalfe, who ought to have known better, wrote:

"Now what does this mutiny proceed from ? Either from fear of our enemy, or from disaffection to our Government ...... They (the sepoys) detest the eastern part of Bengal more than the western ; and the country beyond our frontier they believe to be inhabited by devils and cannibals ; the Burmans they abhor and dread as enchanters against whom the works of mere men cannot prevail. What does all this amount to in brief but this—that we cannot rely on our Native Army ? Whether it be fear of the enemy or disaffection towards us, they fail us in the hour of need. What are we to think of this, and what are our prospects under such circumstances ? It is an awful thing to mow down our own troops with our own artillery, especially those troops on whose fidelity the existence of our empire depends."†

But Herbert Spencer, when referring to the Barrackpur massacre, wrote :

"Down to our day continues the cunning despotism which uses native soldiers to maintain and extend native subjection—a despotism under which, not many years since, a regiment of sepoys was deliberately massacred, for refusing to march without proper clothing."

* *Ibid.*, p. 269.

† Kaye's *Selections from the papers of Lord Metcalfe*, p. 153.

CHAPTER LXIV

THE TERMINATION OF THE BURMESE WAR

The war was very unpopular both in England and in India. The Government was straining every nerve to come out of the war with as much glory and honour as possible. Money was spent on it like water. But failure on all directions stared Government in the face. Success was not to be obtained by fighting alone. So recourse was had to Machiavellian principles. H. H. Wilson writes :

"Reports having reached Sir A. Campbell, that much dissatisfaction had been excited in the district of Dalla, by the orders of the court for a general conscription, a force of four hundred men was embarked under Lieutenant Colonel Kelly and despatched on the 8th of August, to take advantage of any opportunity that might offer of giving support to the discontented."

Comments on the above are not needed. It was by acting on Machiavellian principles that the English succeeded in dismembering some of the districts of the Burman Empire. The same author, who has been quoted above, writes:

"In the impossibility that existed of engaging in any active operations in the direction of Ava, it was judged advisable to employ part of the force in reducing some of the maritime provinces of the Burman kingdom. The district of Tenasserim, comprising the divisions of Tavoy and Mergui, was that selected for attack, · · · (A force) sailed from Rangoon on the 20th August and reached the mouth of the river leading to Tavoy, on the 1st September ; · · · A conspiracy among the garrison facilitated the capture of the place, the second in command making the Maiwoon and his family prisoners, delivered them to the British officer, and the town was occupied without opposition."

Of course, even a child can understand that the conspiracy was incited by the British. The above-quoted author does not state the price that was paid to the second-in-command for this foul act of treachery.

There is no need of narrating in detail the skirmishes and battles fought between the English and the Burmese in which, more often than not, the latter were beaten, not because they lacked in courage or even military strategy but because they were no match for their antagonists in the exercise of the Machiavellian art, which the English had carried to perfection. To add to the misfortunes of the Burmese, their able general Maha Bandula, who had come from the Arrakan frontier, on hearing of the capture of Rangoon, was killed on the 1st of April 1825, by the bursting of a shell while fighting the English from his fortified place of Doonabew. That he was a general of no mean order even his enemies are forced to admit. Major Snodgrass says of him :

"The management of a Burmese army for so long a period, contending against every disadvantage to which a general could be subjected, evinced no small degree of talent, while the position and defences at Donoobew, as a field work, would have done credit to the most scientific Engineer ; . . . During the days of his prosperity, Bandoola seldom exposed his person ; in the battles of Rangoon and Kokeen, he was never under fire ; but he did not hesitate, when circumstances required it, to allow himself to be hemmed in at Donoobew, where he boldly declared he would conquer or die,

and till he actually fell, set his men the first example of the courage he required in all."*

The English were desirous of concluding peace, because the war was unpopular, and they had to pay a very heavy penalty in the loss that occurred to their force by the sickness and death of the men composing it. The Burmese were equally desirous of peace, because the war was not of their own seeking and they had already suffered very heavily. The English by bribery and corruption and holding out other temptations had succeeded in raising traitors in the Burmese camp. They conspired with the Siamese and instigated them to create disturbances in the provinces contiguous to their borders. H. H. Wilson writes:

"Although they (the Siamese) had taken no part in the war, they had continued their military demonstrations. In December (1824), a letter was received by Captain Fenwick, at Martaban, from the Ronna Ron, announcing that he was on his march towards the Pegu frontier, with a Siamese army, and had moved to Kumboori on his way. It was, accordingly, arranged by the Commissioners, that Captain Williamson should be attached to the Siamese and a letter was addressed to the ministers of Siam, in encouragement of the disposition thus manifested."**

Reduced to such straits, it is no wonder that the Burmese were anxious to conclude peace. But they did not make the first move for it. It was the English who did it. To quote the above-mentioned author:

"Although prepared for the renewal of hostilities, the English General, being sensible that it was not the wish of the Government of India to urge them to extremities, availed himself of an opportunity that occurred at this period (after the death of Bundoola), to afford an opening to a negotiation for peace. Amongst the individuals of all ranks, who had now flocked to Prome, was a confidential servant of the prince of Tharawadi, who made no secret of his relation to the prince, nor of the distress which the latter suffered from the occupation of his government by the English. A private letter was, accordingly, addressed to the prince, through this channel, by Sir A. Campbell, stating the disposition of the British Government to terminate the war, whenever the Court of Ava should be inclined to offer reparation for the injuries which had provoked it, and to indemnify the British Government for the expense. This attempt, however, was unavailing, and no answer was received." †

The English had instigated insurrections and created disorder in the Burmese Empire and so they thought they would succeed in forcing the Burmese monarch to accept the terms of peace dictated by them. H. H. Wilson writes:

"Various reports were current at that time, which rendered it probable that the overture would be acceptable. Insurrections had taken place, it was asserted, in different parts of the Burman dominions, and a rumour of the deposition of the King seems to have found extensive currency. The reports turned out to be incorrect: but there was no doubt that the war was highly unpopular, and that the Lotoo, or Great Council of the State, was much divided."§

The principal conditions of peace proposed by the British were so humiliating that they were rejected by the Burmese. So once more hostilities were resumed; but the Burmese, with their slender resources, were unable to carry on the war successfully

* *Narrative of the Burmese War*, pp. 176—177.

** *Loc. Cit.*, p. 230.

† *Ibid.*, p. 230.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

with the English. They were desirous of peace and so were the English. The English had in their train one Burman priest, designated as the Raj-Guru. He was allowed to proceed to Ava, furnished with a private note from the British General, expressive of the readiness of the English to conclude peace with the Burmese King. The priest succeeded in inducing the Burmese Court to make overtures for peace. Hostilities were suspended, and deputies from both parties met in conference on the afternoon of the 30th December 1825. At this meeting, terms were stated and their discussion postponed till the next day. A third meeting took place on the 2nd January 1826. A treaty was drawn up the English copy of which was signed on the 2nd and the Burmese copy on the 3rd January, and an armistice was agreed upon till the 18th of January. But the treaty was not approved of by the Burmese King and so hostilities were again resumed. The British force was on full march towards the capital of Ava, which also scored some victories on the route. The King and his ministers felt that they were in the power of the British; meanwhile they were also informed of the fall of Bhurtpur. It was these considerations which led the Burmese Court now to sue for peace. The treaty of peace was concluded at Yandabu, a place within four days' march of Ava.

Thus ended a war which benefited the Governor-General more than anybody else. H. H. Wilson writes that the war

"inflicted very severe penalties on both the belligerent parties: on the British, by a heavy pecuniary expenditure and awful loss of life: and on the Burman Empire, by an equal sacrifice of men and money, and by the perpetual separation of some of its most highly valued dependencies. The expense of the military operations had greatly exceeded all anticipation, and had been, in some respects, unnecessarily wasteful....A large portion of the expenditure, however, arose out of misinformation with regard to the resources of the Burman kingdom, which, instead of being adequate to the support of the troops, proved to be wholly deficient.*..."

Major Archer's remarks are so pertinent that they may be quoted here *in extenso* as a fitting conclusion to this chapter on the Burmese War.

"At this moment the Company is deeply in debt, consequent upon the enormous, if not profuse, expenditure in as foolish and useless a war as was ever waged between a powerful and civilised state and a barbarous and really contemptible people. This grew out of sending a person to rule the destinies of India in every point deficient in the necessary qualifications; one who possessed, but little experience in the arts of government, particularly in one so foreign to that of his native country......

"The Ava War, entered upon in all the hurry of fear, was of course not guided by judgment, either in the plan of operations or the most fitting time for commencing them...The history of this war is divested of all honourable characteristics,...Death reaped a plenteous harvest at Rangoon and in Arracan; those to whom he did not deal the finishing stroke continue to bear the remains of a disease which baffles all attempts of skill to overcome,...

"Had the Burmese entered over our frontier, we should have met them on vantage ground, and have given them a hearty good drubbing..."†

* *Ibid.*, p. 261.

† (*Tours in Upper India and in parts of the Himalaya Mountains*, Vol. II, pp. 296—304).

CHAPTER LXV

THE REDUCTION OF BHARATPUR

The reduction of Bharatpur by Lord Combermere during the administration of Lord Amherst did not lead to any extention of the territory of British India, but it enhanced the prestige of the British Indian Government. Lake had failed to reduce it. Metcalfe, in his paper on the bombardment of fortfied places transmitted to Lord Moira in November, 1814, wrote :

"At Bharatpore, four assaults and the greatest exertions of the united armies of Bengal and Bombay were ineffectual against a straggling and extensive walled town, situated on a plain, with a dry ditch, which the activity of the enemy converted into a wet one before the breach, and defended by men whom we used to call a rabble.

"Our failure on that occasion may be attributed partly to the difficulties which opposed the attack, and partly to the firmness and activity of the defence, and partly to the presence of a large enemy's army under the walls which embarrassed our operations, and partly to the want of confidence on the part of our troops after the first check."

Then he went on to mention the causes of failure in detail

"The commencement of our systematic failures may be dated from the unfortunate siege of Bharatpore, where a great portion of our military fame was buried.

* * *

"The real cause of our repeated failure seems to be, that our opponents now are better able to defend themselves against us than our opponents were formerly ; consequently that we have not the same superiority on these occasions that we formerly possessed, nor have our troops the same confidence.

"The sight of a white face or a red coat is not sufficient now, on all occasions, as it once was, to make our adversaries flee in dismay and abandon defences in which they have well-grounded confidence.

"Either the gradual and imperceptible circulation of knowledge has given them a better mode of defence and greater resources ; or the charm which ensured us success is dissolved ; or from some other change of circumstances we are less invincible than we were : for certain it is, that there have been occasions on which the backwardness of our troops has been complained of and whatever may have been the immediate cause of their defeat, they have repeatedly turned their backs on the walls of foes who, in theory, would be considered contemptible, and who to this day are compared by some writers in England to a flock of sheep.

"This is a subject which cannot be taken too much into deep consideration. On our military superiority our power entirely depends. That superiority is lessened by every defeat.

* * *

"Often has the fate of India depended on a single army ; often again may the fate of a great part of India depend on a single army ; and if ever, by any combination of unfortunate accidents, such scenes should be exhibited in an army in the field, having the fate of our empire in great measure attached to it, as have occurred more than once in storming parties, and even in considerable detachments, our power might receive a blow from which its recovery might be questionable."

The importance of the above extracts from Metcalfe's paper will be understood

when we come to describe the part played by him in the Bharatpore affairs of 1825.

At the request of Lord Amherst, in the autumn of 1825, when Metcalfe was at the Presidency, on his way to Delhi, he drew up the paper on the general question of interference in the concerns of other states, especially Bharatpore and Ulwar. "The policy which he recommended," writes Kaye, "was adopted by the Supreme Government; and the capture of Bhurtpore and the submission of Ulwar were the results."

He commenced his paper by saying:

"It is presumed to be universally acknowledged as a general principle, that we ought not to interfere in the internal affairs of other states; and the same is enjoined by the repeated orders of the Court of Directors.

"But we are continually compelled to deviate from this rule, which is found untenable in practice; and the deviation is generally sanctioned, and sometimes directed by the same authority.

* * *

"With respect, therefore, to all states over which our supremacy extends, our duty requires that we should support the legitimate succession of the prince, while policy seems to dictate that we should, as much as possible, abstain from any further interference in their affairs.

* * *

"Supposing the principles above stated to be correct, our duty with regard to the succession at Bharatpore may be easily defined.

"We are bound, not by any positive engagements to the Bharatpore State, nor by any claim on her part, but by our duty as supreme guardians of general tranquility, law, and right, to maintain the legal succession of Raja Bulwant Singh to the Raj of Bharatpore; and we cannot acknowledge any other pretender.

* * *

"A display and vigorous exercise of our power, if rendered necessary, would be likely to bring back men's minds in that quarter to a proper tone; and the capture of Bharatpore, if effected in a glorious manner, would do us more honour throughout India, by the removal of the hitherto unfaded impressions caused by our former failure, than any other event that can be conceived."*

Although the English had no business to interfere in the affairs of Bharatpur, yet from interested motives, they did so. Intrigues were set on foot to gain their end and wipe out the disgrace of two former defeats. So when in 1825, the reigning prince died, the succession was disputed by two cousins. The opportunity was seized by the British Indian Government to interfere in the internal affairs of the state and so they went to war with it. The then Commander-in-Chief, Lord Combermere, went in person to conduct the war. An army of 25,000 men with a large artillery invested the place on December 10, 1825 and it was not till the 18th January 1826, that the fortress was reduced †

* Kaye's *Selections from the papers of Lord Metcalfe*, pp. 122-131

† A very good account of the storming of Bharatpur fort on the 18th January 1826 is given in *Memories of Colonel Skinner* (Vol. II, pp. 174 *et seq.*) In a footnote on p. 175, it is mentioned that it was on the suggestion of Colonel Skinner that the fort was mined.

"When the breach was first reported practicable by the engineer officer, Lord Combermere asked Skinner, who was by, his opinion on the subject; to which he only replied that he was unworthy

Long-necked Bastion, Bharatpur

Combermere, Bharatpur

It is said that there was a legend current in that state that the gods had built the fortress and it would be captured only when an "alligator" came across the sea to besiege it. The name of the commander of the besieging army sounded something like "Kumbhir", which in some of the Indian vernaculars means an alligator. This worked upon the minds of the defenders of the fortress, they became depressed, lost heart and so the place fell.

But it is not improbable that some of the beleagured army were bribed. This is to be inferred from the following:

"From the moment that Lord Combermere arrived in the camp before Bharatpur, or rather which surrounded that place, he was constantly in motion visiting every part of a most extensive encampment, and superintending every operation from the commencement to its final close. Not content with this, on the day of the assault, he actually headed one of the storming parties himself, and had an officer killed on each side of him on the breach. Such conduct in a commander, on ordinary occasions, would be deservedly censured as unnecessary and foolhardy exposure. Here, the character of our army, and safety of our East Indian possessions, perhaps even our very existence depended on the success of the moment: and the presence of the Commander-in-Chief almost supplied the absence of two or three thousand Europeans. From the time of Lord Lake's failure against this place, it had never ceased to be thrown in our teeth by the Natives, in every part of the East; and many a man, in conversing about our successes, has silenced me in a moment, by saying. "All this may be very true, but can you take Bharatpoor?" Even after it was taken, no Native would believe it was captured by storm; and to the last hour of my residence in India, they persisted in asserting that it was bought, not conquered."*

After the capture of Bharatpur, the atrocities, barbarities and cruelties perpetrated by British officers and men on the hapless and helpless people of that town may be inferred from the following recorded by two officers in their works on travels in Northern India.

Major Archer writes under date of 29th January, 1823:

"After dinner, some acting gentry, or rather buffoons, made their appearance, and caused us to laugh by their most ludicrous representation of the capture of Bharatpore, and our plundering it, with vivacity, as even to cut the hair off the heads of the people."§

Captain Mundy, in his pen and pencil sketches of India tells the amusing story of a native pantomime in which the *dramatis personae* were an English prize-agent and a Bharatpore peasant.

"The former wore an immense cock-hat and sword, the latter was stark naked with the exception of a scanty waist-cloth. The prize-agent stops him and demands his jewels and money.

to touch his excellency's shoe, much more so to offer him advice. But his lordship, desirous of learning his opinion, repeated the question, and urged a reply. On which Skinner said that the breach was impracticable, and that, if attempted, the men would sink up to their armpits in the rubbish, and there would be a repetition of the former failures. Colonel—, then a subaltern in the engineers, said he differed, but would ascertain the fact, and gallantly rushed forward crossed the ditch, and found that it was as Skinner had stated. He returned untouched by the fire, patted Skinner on the back, and said, 'Old boy, you are right and I am wrong.' Skinner then said they must just do as the Mahrattas used to do on similar occassions, and trust to mining. They did mine, and the event proved the soundness of his opinion."

* Welsh's *Military Reminiscences*, Vol. II. pp. 240-241.

§ (*Tours in Upper India*, p. 101).

The half-starved wretch protests his poverty, and appeals to his own miserable appearance as the proof. The Englishman, upon his, makes him a furious speech, well garnished with G-d-d-mns, seizes on the trembling Bharatporean, and determined not to leave him without having extracted something from him, takes out a pair of scissors, cuts off his long shaggy hair close to his skull crams it into his pockets, and exit swearing."

The above needs no comments.

To meet the expenses of the Burmese war and the Bharatpur campaign, Lord Amherst made the Indian princes, whether reigning or pensioners, advance him money to prosecute his ambitious military designs.

So writes John Malcolm Ludlow in his *British India.**

"The time for openly plundering native princes was gone with Warren Hastings. One observes, however, at this time, the extreme prevalence of the practice of obtaining loans from them. At the end of 1825, the king of Oude lends £1,000,000 sterling; £500,000 for two years the next year. The Baiza Baee, after Sindhia's decease, lent £800,000. In the general loans which were contracted, we find smaller chiefs contributing their quota. The Raja of Nagpur £50,000, the Raja of Benares £20,000; even the unfortunate Bajee Rao, the ex-Peshwa, refunding a very considerable sum for the purpose out of the savings from his pension."

Vol. II, p. 65

CHAPTER LXVI

AMHERST'S VISIT TO DELHI

The Burmese war had made Amherst very unpopular with the authorities in England. To retrieve his popularity, he declared war against Bharatpur. But not content with the successful termination of that war, he made another bid for popularity by unnecessarily humiliating the position of the Mughal Emperor of Delhi. With this object in view, he proceeded to Delhi, arriving at that Imperial Capital on the 15th of February, 1827. He had an interview with His Majesty on the 17th. The latter was seated on

"the *Takht-i-Taoos,* or Peacock Throne, and the Governor-General took his seat in a State Chair in front of it on the right, and sat at right angles to His Majesty, the Resident and other officers present as well as the chief personages of the Court, all standing." *

Amherst's conduct was considered so derogatory to His Majesty that he despatched Ram Mohan Roy to England. It is true that His Majesty consented to an interview to the Governor-General, for as he explained to the Resident that

"he had been influenced by an apprehension of consequences, similar to those which had resulted from the objection which His Majesty had urged to a meeting with the Marquis of Hastings on the footing then proposed, attributing, as he expressly stated, to this cause the subsequent assumption by the Nawab Vizier of the title of King; that, in the hope of obviating these consequences, he had reluctantly acquiesced in the ceremonial established by Lord Amherst, but that, instead of reaping from that concession the benefit which he expected, advantage was afterwards taken of it to introduce an alteration of the *ulkab,...*" †

A year afterwards the then Commander-in-Chief, Lord Combermere, visited the Emperor, on the 3rd February, 1828. Major Archer, who was his A. D. C., has recorded in his *Tours in Upper India* (p. 110) a description of that visit. The Commander-in-Chief and his staff paid homage to the Emperor and presented the usual *nuzzer,* regarding which Major Archer wrote that

"It is known that by such means he is necessitated to eke out the scanty pittance allowed to him and his numerous family, servants, and dependants residing in the fort. How are the mighty fallen!"

In a *shooqua* from His Majesty to the address of the Resident, received on the 26th November, 1831, His Majesty said:

"I had invariably looked for relief from the Government in every case through the medium of the Resident in attendance at my Court and that I had always continued to make him the channel of communicating my grievances to the Government, but that no one had ever exerted himself, in any instance, in my cause. Providence at length favoured me with a visit from Lord Amherst, which I hailed with feelings of the fullest confidence and delight at the prospect which it afforded of securing to me the fulfilment of the pledges that had been given me and the realization of all

* P. 338 of Punjab Government Records, Delhi Residency and Agency, 1807-1857, (Vol. I.)

† *Ibid.,* p. 359.

my desires. I accordingly did everything in my power to please His Lordship, and showed him every kindness that I could possibly manifest, explaining at the same time the engagements of the British Government towards me and making a full disclosure of my wishes to him. His Lordship, however, evinced as little disposition as others to redeem those engagements or execute the provisions contained in the regulations of Government, and not confining himself to this, he had recourse to the novel procedure of setting aside the ceremonials and forms of address (*adab wu alkab*) observed by his predecessors, thus lowering me even in respect of the style of correspondence adopted towards me,—a thing that I could have least expected."*

The degradation of the Delhi Emperor did not produce any stir among the people of India. In a letter, dated the 20th of August, 1800, Sir Arthur Wellesley wrote to Major (afterwards Sir Thomas) Munro :

"As for the wishes of the people, particularly in this country, I put them out of the question. They are the only philosophers about their governors that ever I met with—if indifference constitutes that character."

Peter Auber, in his *Rise and Progress of the British Power in India* (Vol. II, p. 606), writes that Lord Amherst

"terminated the implied vassalage previously rendered, or was supposed to exist towards the royal family, by the British Government. The event created, very naturally, a strong sensation at the time, as it was the first instance of our openly and decidedly asserting the independence of the British power : it was generally stated that the crown of Hindustan had been transferred to the British nation.

"The event is said to have been viewed with deep melancholy by the royal family and their dependants. They felt, whatever privations they might have suffered from the Mahrattas, their title to the sovereignty of India, had been invariably acknowledged. They were now, for the first time, divested of it."

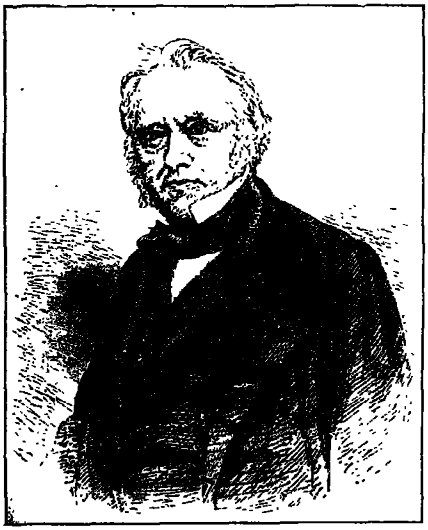
There was at that time in India no awakening of the national consciousness, no sentiment of patriotism, as that term is understood in the modern Christian countries of the West. This made the rise of the Christian power possible in India.

After the degradation of the Mughal Emperor, Amherst continued his journey northward to the Himalayas and spent the summer at Simla, where he received a friendly mission from Ranjit Singh and also the intelligence of the rupture between Russia and Persia. After quitting Simla in the end of June, he returned to Calcutta, where he stayed till the close of March, 1828, when placing the provisional government in the hands of Mr. W. B. Bayley, he embarked for his native country.

* *Ibid.*, p. 347.

Right Hon. Charles T. Baron Metcalfe, G. C. B.

Rammohun Roy



Lord Macaulay

Lord William Cavendish Bentinck

CHAPTFR LXVII

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK'S ADMINISTRATION (1828—1835)

Lord William Bentinck had served as Governor of Madras but was recalled after the outbreak of the Mutiny at Vellore. The disgrace was rankling in his breast, and so he applied for the post of Governor-General of India after the retirement of Amherst. The course which he adopted was an unusual one. But it has been justified on the ground that

"He wished that the country which had been the scene of his undeserved humiliation, should also be the scene of his administrative triumph. These considerations must be taken into full account, if we would form an accurate estimate of the motives which induced Lord William Bentinck to appear as a candidate for the office."*

Kaye, from whose article in the *Calcutta Review* the above extract has been made, mentions the special qualifications which Bentinck possessed for the Indian administration. He writes:

"When formerly Governor of Madras, he had devoted his active mind with great ardour to the study of Indian politics. He had made himself master of every subject connected with the internal economy and working of the Government. He had sketched out many plans for the improvement of the administration. In his eagerness to carry those views into effect and to prevent their being subverted by superior authority, he had, in one instance, adopted the extraordinary step of quitting his own presidency and proceeding to Calcutta."†

But no Indian having any sense of self-respect and not altogether wanting in patriotism, can praise Bentinck for all the trouble he took for making himself master of every subject connected with the working of the government, during the period of his governorship of Madras. True it is, that he perceived the benefits which Muhammadan rule had conferred on the natives of this country and which the Anglo-Indian Government of that day from the very nature of its constitution was precluded from doing. He wrote:

"In many respects the Mahomedans surpassed our rule; they settled in the countries which they conquered; they intermixed and intermarried with the natives: they admitted them to all privileges; the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and the conquered became identified. Our policy, on the contrary, has been the reverse of this,—cold, selfish and unfeeling."

It was easy for him to diagnose the disease and mention its symptoms. He knew the remedy also—the remedy which was calculated to cure the disease. But he did not propose to apply the remedy. It was during his governorship of Madras that one of the members of his council there, by the name of William Thackeray, penned a minute from which the following extracts are made:

"It is very proper that in England, a good share of the produce of the earth should be appropriated to support certain families in affluence, to produce senators, sages, and heroes for the service

* *The Calcutta Review*, Vol. I, p. 34.

† *Ibid.*, p. 340.

and defence of the state. . . . . . . The leisure, independence, and high ideas, which the enjoyment of this rent affords, has enabled them to raise Britain to the pinnacle of glory. Long may they enjoy it;—but in India, that haughty spirit, independence, and deep thought, which the possession of great wealth sometimes gives ought to be suppressed. They are directly adverse to our power and interest. . . . . . . We do not want generals, statesmen, and legislators: we want industrious husbandmen."

Referring to the above, Mr. William Digby truly observes:

"Mr. Thackeray was without excuse. Lord William Bentinck, who of set purpose selected Mr. Thackeray as his mouthpiece, they holding ideas in common, is even more without excuse."*

If we remember the above facts, we shall be able to understand Bentinck's policy when he held the office of Governor-General of India. Of course, he was not popular with the Anglo-Indian community of his day, because he disturbed the allowance of the civil and military officers. He was denounced by his Christian countrymen, because he touched their pockets. It is on this account that the memory of Bentinck is held in execration in the annals of Anglo-India. Even the paid historiographer of the East India Company, Thornton, had no good words to say of Lord William Bentinck. The reader is referred to his History of British India for the estimate he formed of his lordship.† So fair-minded a writer as the Honorable Mr. Frederick Shore wrote of Bentinck:

"But what has been the general result of Lord William's government? What has become of his determination to do his best for the interests of the people over whom he has been placed? Professions in abundance we have had; it has been a government of professions, which has begun and ended in words. It may have been his intention to have fulfilled them; but he forgot to add the qualifying proviso, that his good intentions were never to interfere with the main principle of the British Indian Government, profit to themselves and their masters at the expense of the people of India. * * The abominable system of purveyance and forced labour is still in full force. The commerce and manufactures of the country are daily deteriorated by the vexatious system of internal duties which is still preserved . . . . . . the people are neither happier nor richer than they were before—indeed, their impoverishment has been progressive—for while the evils enumerated have continued in full force, the revenue screw has scarcely been relaxed half a thread of the many hundreds of which it is composed; . . . . . . while the natives, the East Indians, and the English settlers, are found equally murmuring at the little which has been practically done to improve their condition."§

But because he was unpopular with his own countrymen, it does not necessarily follow that he wanted to injure them. No, he was their true friend and well-wisher.

* *Prosperous British India*, p. 41.

† "It remains only to state that he (Lord Bentinck) quitted India in May, 1835, having held the office of Governor-General somewhat longer than the ordinary period; but having done less for the interest of India and for his own reputation than any who had occupied his place since the commencement of the nineteenth century, with the single exception of Sir George Barlow. His besetting weakness was vanity—the idol of his worship was popularity, and he sought to win its behests by an unrestrained sacrifice to what is called the 'Spirit of the Age." Economy was in fashion, and therefore Lord William Bentinck was an economist. It was a period when showy and noisy pretension was permitted in many instances to carry off the rewards and honors which were due only to deep and solid attainments, and Lord William Bentinck challenged praise for a system designed to work in accordance with the popular feeling—professing to foster merit, but, in truth, calculated to foster only undue influence . . . . . . For all these acts, charity itself can assign no motive but a weak and inordinate appetite for temporary admiration." Vol. V, pp. 235-36.

§ *Notes on Indian Affairs*, Vol. II, pp. 223-224.

Every political and administrative measure that he carried out in India was for their benefit and calculated to do harm to the natives of the soil.

By Indian historians in general, Bentinck is considered to have been a peace-loving Governor-General. It is true that he did not involve India in costly wars like those of which his predecessors, Wellesley, Marquis of Hastings and Lord Amherst had been guilty. But then the finances of the country were in such a precarious condition when he was appointed to the high post of Governor-General that he could not indulge in the luxury of any costly war. He had to carry out retrenchments and so he was obliged to touch the pockets of his own co-religionists and compatriots, for which he was so unpopular with them.

However, there was one war during his regime by which a large province was made to lose its independence. Kurg was coveted by Anglo-Indians, because it appeared to them to be almost a paradise on earth. Says Mr. L. Bowring, who was for some years Chief Commissioner of Mysore and Kurg, *

"Few parts of India are more picturesque than the little hill province of Coorg, and nowhere can be found a more gallant and loyal race than its inhabitants.........In former days, when to a native mind, the merit of a territory was its inaccessibility, few States enjoyed such an immunity from invasion as Coorg, the only approaches to it being through dense tangled woods, or up the face of steep mountains, clothed with forest trees, and cut up by stony water-courses."*

It was to lift the *purdah* of and annex this beautiful land, that Bentinck made a war on its sovereign. The princes of Kurg were always friendly to the English. When the latter went to war with Tipu, the help which they received from the then reigning prince of Kurg, made them conclude a treaty with Kurg in 1790 with the following stipulations:

"1 While the sun and moon endure, the faith of the contracting parties shall be kept inviolate.

2. Tippoo and his allies are to be treated as common enemies. The Rajah will do all in his power to assist the English to injure Tippo.

3. The Rajah will furnish, for fair payment, all supplies his country affords, and have no connection with other 'topiwallahs'

4. The Company guarantee the independence of Coorg, and the maintenance of the Rajah's interests in the case of a peace with Tippoo.

5. An asylum and every hospitality is offered to the Rajah and his family at Tellichery until the establishment of peace.

God, Sun, Moon and Earth be witness!" †

But as usual with the East India Company, their dealings with Kurg were not fair. It would seem that Bentinck was bent upon annexing Kurg because he knew its value to the colonisers of his race and creed when he was Governor of Madras. No trouble would have occurred, had the Kurg question been properly dealt with. The claims of the last Raja of Kurg were not well founded. Revd. Dr. Mœgling, in his history of Kurg, wrote in the *Calcutta Review*:

"The present ex-Rajah succeeded. He was acknowledged by the British Government without any difficulty, it appears. Devammaji's claims, and the promises of the Supreme Government given to her

* "Eastern Experiences" (pp. 223, 238):

† *The Calcutta Review*, September 1856, p. 188.

father were overlooked. The resolution of the Marquis of Hastings, that the Coorg question should be investigated when Virarajendra's daughter would reach majority, seems to have been forgotten."*

The Raja was represented (mis-represented) to be an incarnation of the Devil, and it was said that he delighted in murdering in cold blood his relatives and subjects. Affairs reached the climax when the Raja's sister Devammaji and her husband, fearing assassination at the hands of the Raja, sought protection of the Resident of Mysore. It does not seem unreasonable that she fled to the Company's territorry, in order to draw the attention of the Company to her claims to the sovereignty of Kurg. It may be that she might have concocted all the stories of the cruelties of her brother in order to gain her own end. But the Resident and the Company not only took her and her husband under their protection, but they wanted to coerce the Raja. The Raja as an independent sovereign resented this interference. He was irritated beyond measure and it is alleged that he indulged in mad schemes. If he did so, his conduct was not unjustifiable. Perhaps, the authorities were seeking for a pretext to annihilate the sovereignty of Kurg and so provoked the Raja to take those measures which were necessary to maintain his dignity and safety.

This was just what the authorities were longing for. War was declared against the Raja. An expedition under British officers was sent to his territory. The Raja never meant war and so it was not difficult for the British force to occupy his country. Even the Revd. Dr. Mœgling is forced to say that

"the Rajah, incited partly by the hope. . . . . . . .that a reconciliation was yet possible, partly by the fear, that he might lose all, if matters went to extremities, sent orders prohibiting the Coorgs from encountering the troops of the Company. To this vacillation of the Rajah, the several divisions of the British expedition, then marching into Coorg, were more indebted for their success and even safety, than to the skill and talents of their commanders."†

The Raja submitted. He was dethroned and sent a captive to Benares. Had Bentinck been an honest man, here an opportunity presented itself to investigate the claims of the princess to the throne of Kurg. He did nothing of the sort, but on the contrary annexed the province on the ostensible plea that the people of Kurg unanimously desired to be placed under the protection of the East India Company! We know the significance of this diplomatic declaration.§

* *Ibid.*, p. 196.

† *Ibid.*, p. 199.

§ Thornton, as an apologist for the annexation of Kurg, writes :

"The annexation of the conquered territory to the British dominions is not, on the first view, so clearly justifiable, but a very few words of explanation will shew that, in this instance also, the right course was taken. The Rajah was childless [this is not true, as one of the Raja's daughters was married to an English gentleman] and he had taken effectual measures to cut off all pretensions to the succession not derived from himself. The vacant throne was without a claimant, and the power which had occupied the country was called upon to provide in some manner for the administration of the government. A stranger might have been placed on the musnud; but there was no reason for the exercise of such self-denial on the part of the British Government, more especially as the people manifested a strong desire to become British subjects. The existence of such a desire removed every pretension for hesitation...." (Vol. V, pp. 214-215.)

The following Proclamation was issued to annihilate the national existence of Kurg :

"Whereas it is the unanimous wish of the inhabitants of Coorg to be taken under the protection of the British Government, His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor-General has been pleased to resolve, that the territory heretofore governed by Virarajendra Vodeyar shall be transferred to the Honorable Company. The inhabitants are hereby assured that they shall not again be subjected to native rule, that their civil and religious usages will be respected, and that the greatest desire will invariably be shown by the British Government to augment their security, comfort and happiness."

Bowring writes :

"the province being one of the very few British possessions in India which has become such not by conquest, but by the free consent of the population. Perhaps owing to this fact, the government to which they announced their adhesion in 1834, has, not without good reason, shown them constant indulgence, and an exceptional deference towards their feelings and prejudices. For instance, the slaughter of cattle in Coorg is and likely to remain, forbidden, so long as the people deprecate it, nor would it be prudent or just to ignore their feelings on the subject, in the face of a distinct promise given to them by Colonel Fraser at the time of annexation."*

It is admitted that Kurg is not a conquered province. Its inhabitants are not then bondsmen of England. But do they enjoy all the rights and privileges of free citizens ?

It was solemnly proclaimed that the civil usages of the inhabitants of Kurg would be respected. But this solemn proclamation was violated by the English when cash payment was demanded for land assessment. The Revd. Dr. Mœgling writes :

"Under the Rajas, the assessment had been paid in kind. The Collector of Mangalore now demanded cash payment ; this was considered a grievance, as the farmers were laid under tribute by the money changers."

There was an insurrection, which was put down with a high hand.

This was how the civil usages of the inhabitants of Kurg were respected !

Lord Bentinck should be held responsible for the ill-treatment that the Ex-Raja received at the hands of the E. I. Company and to obtain redress for which he went personally to England. The wrongs of the Raja need not be dilated on here.

Kurg was annexed because it was considered fit for colonisation by English settlers. The number of Englishmen who have settled in Kurg as coffee-planters is a very large one, as may be judged from the fact of its being the largest coffee producing province in India. According to the Agricultural Statistics for 1904-5, Kurg has an area of 48,142 acres of land under coffee cultivation. Bowring wrote :

"If the progress of enlightenment among the Coorgs has been slower than could be desired, their material progress has been remarkable. This is mainly owing to the extensive operations of the coffee-planters, who...began to colonise the country, the splendid forests in which promised a rich reward to the enterprising settler.

"From the time when Europeans began to settle in the district to plant coffee, the forests, with which the country was covered, began to acquire a new value. But at first any applicant received permission to commence operations in woods not claimed by private individuals, or regarded as

* Loc. Cit., p. 247.

sacred forests. Very little trouble was taken about securing proper grants, permission to cultivate coffee on payment of the Government excise being deemed sufficient."*

The annexation of Kurg was immensely beneficial to every British officer who served in the expedition to that principality. By the distribution of the Kurg prize money, Sir P. Lindsay received one-sixteenth of the whole amount, and the other officers shared as follows:

Colonels	Rs.	25,000	each
Lieut.-Colonels	"	15,000	"
Majors	"	10,000	"
Captains	"	5,000	"
Subalterns	"	2,500	"

(Asiatic Journal, May 1836, p. 33).

After this need one wonder why the inhabitants of Kurg *unanimously* desired to place themselves under the protection of the English !†

Bentinck annexed Kachar under the doctrine of lapse—a doctrine which became so notorious during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Dalhousie. The ruler of Kachar, Govinda Chandra by name, was assassinated in 1830 and had no male heir and so the "benevolent" Bentinck did not scruple to annex it.

Shortly before his departure from India, Bentinck confiscated part of the possessions of the Raja of Jynteah on the ground of infraction of treaty !

It is true that excepting Kurg and Kachar no other province of India was annexed to the British dominion by Lord Bentinck.

He had his eye on Mysore also. He did not, however, annex it, because he could not do so without offering the Nizam of Hyderabad at least half of it. So he deprived the Maharaja of all power, placing the administration in the hands of British officers.

Bentinck had no right to deal with the Maharaja of Mysore in the manner in which he did so. The letter, dated September 7th, 1831, he wrote to that unfortunate prince, depriving him of all power to manage the affairs of his principality, did not allow him to answer the allegations contained in it or to afford him an opportunity to exculpate his conduct.

Major Evans Bell, in his work on *The Mysore Reversion*, has thoroughly exposed the falsehoods with which that letter abounds. He writes:

"The summary substitution of direct British management was a somewhat harsh remedy for any administrative abuses, when the Treaty gave us the power of dictating and enforcing the acceptance

* Loc. Cit. p. 260.

† The deposed Raja of Kurg went (in 1852) to England to represent his case to the authorities there, and to obtain redress, if possible, for the wrongs inflicted on him. He took with him his only daughter, who was converted to Christianity and married to an English gentleman there. It is needless to say that no heed was paid to his representations. That laird of the Pen, Lord Dalhousie, insulted him. The Raja's case was put before the British public in a pamphlet published in 1857 by John Bumpus, 158, Oxford Street, London, and written by an officer formerly in the service of His Highness Veer Rajunder Waddeer, Rajah of Coorg.

of such ordinances as might have removed all cause of offence ....according to the strict letter of the Treaty (article IV), when it should be thought necessary to have recourse to this extreme measure, we had no right to attack the whole of Mysore, but only 'such part or parts' as should be required to render the funds of the State 'efficient and available either in time of peace or war'...

"The first attachment of the country by Lord William Bentinck was not justified either absolutely by the terms of the treaty or morally by any special urgency of outraged humanity, or of danger to the tranquillity of our own adjacent provinces. ... The fact is that the subsidy had been always paid with the utmost punctuality, and that not a single instalment was due at the date of the Governor-General's letter".

"Thus the grounds alleged for the original attachment of the country are not only unsustainable by terms of the Treaty, but are found to be even more opposed to truth than Lord William Bentinck was ever made aware."*

Bentinck should have shown some consideration for the case of the Raja and asked him for an explanation before depriving him of power in his principality, He should not have acted on the advice of the then Governor of Madras, who was one Stephen Lushington, whose early career was not unknown to the Governor-General. For it was during his Governorship of Madras in 1805 that young Stephen Lushington, who had come out as a writer to Madras in 1791, had to leave it under a cloud for embezzlement of public revenue.†

His interference in the Jeypore affairs, upsetting the arrangements of his predecessors, led to the belief that he contemplated the annexation of that State of Rajputana. It is stated in the *Political History of Jeypore* (p. 29), published in 1868 as one of the Selections from the Records of the Government of India, Foreign Department No. LXV, that

"the appointment of Jootha Ram as minister. . . . was ascribed to a desire on the part of the British Government to annex the country, on account of the certain ensuing anarchy."

The tribute of the Raja of Jodhpur had fallen into arrear. An army had been assembled to overawe that prince, who was also threatened with dethronement. The district of Sambhar and a share of the Sambhar salt lake were taken possession of as a security. Lord William Bentinck also detained as security the Jeypore share of the Sambhar salt lake and district. Referring to this, Ludlow writes, that this

"gave great offence to both prince and people. A jealousy of the English sprang up, and a few months after Lord William Bentinck's departure (4th June, 1835), an attack was made on the Resident Major Alves, and his assistant, Mr. Blake, was killed."§

The policy which his Lordship pursued in the Political or Foreign Department was such as paved the way to the annexation of the States of several independent or feudatory princes of Hindustan and bringing them under the direct administration of the East India Company. The manner in which he treated those princes was not calculated to make the relations between them and the English pleasant.

Take the case of Oudh. Bentinck meddled unnecessarily with the internal politics of

* Pp. 21-24.

† See Major Evans Bell's *Memoirs of General John Briggs, pp. 151 et seq.*

§ *History of British India*, Vol. II, p. 95.

this Kingdom. His visit to Oudh in 1831 did not forebode good for that Kingdom. In his report of 11th July 1831, he wrote :

"I thought it right to declare to his Majesty beforehand, that the opinion I should offer to the home authorities would be, that unless a decided reform in the administration should take place, there would be no remedy left except in the direct assumption of the management of the Oudh territories by the British Government."

It is a well-known fact that this minute of Lord Bentinck strengthened the hands of Lord Dalhousie and the Directors of the East India Company, who were bent upon annexing Oudh.

The King of Oudh was alarmed by the hostile attitude which Bentinck assumed towards him. He intended the dispatch of an embassy to England to represent his case to the authorities. But how this was frustrated by Bentinck is not so well-known as it ought to be. A correspondent under the pseudonym of "Veritas" wrote to the *Indian Examiner and Universal Review* for April, 1847 :

Some ten or twelve years ago, it was generally believed, and publicly spoken of in the Calcutta Journals, that the East India Company would depose the then reigning sovereign of Oudh, take his rich country and treasury, in which he had enormous wealth, to themselves and pension the king, as they had many other native princes of India whose possessions they coveted. The king, greatly alarmed at the prospect of losing his kingdom, and becoming a pensioner of the East India Company resolved on sending an embassy to England, in order to create a sympathy in the British people, and avert, if possible, the wrongs likely to be done him.

"Having come to this resolution, his Majesty selected for the embassy Colonel du Bois an intelligent, talented gentleman, who then held a post of honor in the king's service. A native gentleman, from the Court of Oudh, was also to accompany Colonel du Bois as joint representative of his Majesty . . . .while these matters were progressing, the supreme Government of India became alarmed at the probable results of the mission,. . . . determined at once to frustrate the king's intentions, and to ruin the embassy immediately. A plot was accordingly laid for this purpose, in which a lady . . . . took an active part, and deprived it of all its power. Charges of conspiracy against the East India Company's Government were brought forward against Colonel du Bois, as the embassy was on the eve of departure for England . . . Everything was carried on in secret against him and before the matter was brought to a conclusion the ship sailed, and the embassy proceeded in opposition to the Government,. . . . The Government arbitrarily compelled the King of Oudh to dismiss his faithful servant, Colonel du Bois, on these absurd charges, brought forward for the express purpose of frustating the King's intentions. . . . Colonel du Bois, though aware previous to quitting India, that he was charged with conspiracy against the East India Company, yet conscious of his own innocence, never supposed that he would be injured by it. What, then, must have been his horror and astonishment, on receiving his dismissal, which had ben wrung from the King, his master, by the supreme Government of Bengal, and sent after him, in breathless haste, and without a moment's delay. . . .On Colonel du Bois being dismissed from the embassy, they had nothing to fear from the native gentleman, who was left in a helpless condition, friendless and in a strange country, where he knew not a word of the language, consequently not in a position to gain many in his favour ; and after suffering great anxiety of mind he . . . . became depressed in spirits, ill in health, and ultimately died at Poonah, on his way back to his sovereign, at Lucknow . . . . Colonel du Bois, finding he could obtain no redress from the East India Company, eventually sent his wife Madame du Bois to Calcutta, to seek an interview with Lord William Bentinck, and to implore him to redress his grievances ; but the Governor-General was inexorable, for he had himself concocted the plot, for the benefit of his masters . . . . After this piece of injustice from the East India Company, Colonel du Bois retired to France, and would have held a post of high honour in

his native land; but Lord William Bentinck had returned from India, and was then in France, and in addition to the signal service he had done him with the King of Oudh, now prevented the King of the French from conferring this post of honour on him, by representing that Colonel du Bois had entered into a conspiracy against the East India Company's Government, though he knew at the same time that it was one of the foulest plots ever concocted to ruin the character of an honourable man, and to prevent the course of justice. . . . ."*

In this connection must also be mentioned the attitude of Bentinck to the embassy of the King of Delhi to England. The celebrated Hindu reformer, Ram Mohun Roy, was selected by the King to represent his grievances to the authorities in England. As Ram Mohun Roy was his ambassador, the title of Raja was conferred on him to exalt his dignity. Bentinck was much enraged at the proceedings of the King. To mark his displeasure with the conduct of His Majesty—whose vassal the East India Company, of which he was the representative, was, he did not see the King when he passed by Delhi.† This act of positive discourtesy, if not disloyalty, of Bentinck must have rankled in the breast of the King and of his relatives and loyal subjects and was probably one of the contributing causes of the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

Perhaps the fact is not so well known as it deserves to be that Bentinck was the author of a plot which had for its object the extinction of the Maratha Principality of Gwalior. Writes Mr. John Hope, a former Superintending Surgeon of Sindhia's Contingent, and Surgeon to the Court of Gwalior, in his brochure "The House of

* *The Indian Examiner and Universal Review*, April; 1847, pp. 178-187.

† Raja Ram Mohun Roy was the bearer of a letter from His Majesty, the King of Delhi, to the King of England, in which it was stated :

"Even in the communication above stated insult, in point of form, was added to injustice. All the Governor-Generals who have preceded Lord Amherst in the Government of the British territories in India have thought it no degradation to themselves to address me or my august Father in the style that custom has accorded to Royalty. Lord Amherst, however, thought proper to reduce me, in the form of communication, to the footing of an equal, and thereby to rob me even of the cheap gratification of the usual ceremonials of address, so as to humble me, as far as possible, in the eyes of all ranks of people."

The King's deputation of Raja Ram Mohun Roy to England greatly enraged the Governor-General, who directed his Secretary, Mr. H. T. Prinsep, to write to Mr. W. B. Martin, Resident at Delhi, on 20th November, 1831 to

"call upon His Majesty for a distinct declaration whether Ram Mohun Roy is authorized to act as His Majesty's agent to present the letter from His Majesty from which the above passage is cited, and to advocate the appeal prosecuted therein against the forms of intercourse established."

The King did not see his way to disavow Raja Ram Mohun Roy and so the Resident was directed to inform His Majesty that

"Under the distinct avowal made by the King that Ram Mohun Roy is now his agent in England for prosecuting an appeal, among other points, against the footing on which the forms of intercourse and of correspondence between His Majesty and the Governor-General were placed by His Lordship's predecessor, the Earl Amherst, it seems to His Lordship to be impossible that any intercourse on that footing can be renewed, which His Majesty has in his letter to the King of England characterized as degrading and insulting."

For all particulars, see *Records of the Delhi Residency and Agency*, (Lahore, 1911,) Chapter XI, Failure of Negotiations for a meeting between the Governor-General (Lord William Bentinck) and His Majesty the King of Delhi in 1831.

Sindhia, a Sketch," published in 1863 by Messrs. Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green :

"But if these dangers surrounded him [Maharaja Junko Scindea] in his capital, he was threatened with no less danger fron the Council of Calcutta. Secret deliberations were there being held, with a view to discover what profit could be made out of the troubles of this weak but most faithful young prince, ...A demi-official letter was written to the Resident by the Chief Secretary of the Foreign Department, desiring him to learn at a private interview, by way of a feeler, if the Maharajah, encircled as he was by serious troubles—*troubles mainly caused by our government*—would like to resign ; assigning over the country to the British Government, and receiving a handsome pension, which would be paid out of his own revenues. There can be very little doubt that this demi-official document was of the genus *mystic*, and that no copy of it can now be found among the archives pertaining to India. Mr. Cavendish, than whom no Englishman ever attained a greater ascendancy over the minds of the natives with whom he had concern, declined to make such a suggestion and his answer threw a damp upon the hopes of the annexationists. . . . . The Government officials were of course extremely angry. The press, almost entirely supported by the civil and military services which are immensely benefited by annexation, was very abusive. Presently another demi-official letter arrived ; this time from the Deputy Secretary of the Foreign Department—a '*mystic*' one we may be quite sure—strongly expostulating with Mr. Cavendish upon his proceedings, and concluding with this significant remark ; 'You have thus allowed a favourable chance to escape of connecting the Agra to the Bombay Presidency.' Of course the Resident's doom was fixed, though not just then declared. A few months afterwards, the Governor-General gratified his feelings of resentment by removing Mr. Cavendish to another native court....

"Lest it should be thought by any one . . . that in this little sketch of his (Lord William Bentinck's) foreign policy, we have given even the slightest touch of colouring, we will relate, by way of illustration, an amusing anecdote, which is known to three or four persons now living, and which sufficiently confirms our statement that, in respect of the rights of native states, his lordship entirely overlooked the tenth commandment. It happened that Major Sutherland was selected to fill the office vacated by Mr. Cavendish......He therefore waited on the Governor-General in Calcutta, to learn what the policy was to be at Gwalior; was it to be intervention or non-intervention? Lord Bentinck, whose disposition, like that of Lord Palmerston, loved a joke, quickly replied: 'Look here, Major,' and his lordship threw back his head, opened wide his mouth, and placed his thumb and finger together like a boy about to swallow a sugar-plum. Then turning to the astonished Major he said: 'If the Gwalior State *will* fall down your throat, you are not to shut your mouth, as Mr. Cavendish did, but swallow it; that is *my* policy......To 'the traditionary old Indians,' the objects of so much scorn in these days, this doctrine smacks of petty larceny. Imagine a magistrate of Bow Street to say to some smart-looking man, with a cloak hanging on his arm for a purpose, 'Don't prowl about the theatres at night, picking pockets, for that is larceny; but if you see a person drop his purse, keep it; a traditionary old beak would call this petty larceny, but I tell you it is all right!' In a moral point of view, we think the two cases exactly parallel."

It seems that Bentinck was also scheming to absorb and annex other principalities of Central India. In 1835, there was a disputed succession to the throne of Jhansi. There were four claimants. Bentinck's decision is described by the Secretary to Government as follows :

"On this occasion the lawful heir by blood, descended of the body of Sheo Ram Bhow, was recognised as successor to the Raj, to the disallowance of a boy alleged to have been adopted, or nominated as successor by the late Rajah the day before his death, who if adopted would have

been unquestionably the heir to any property of his adoptive father to the exclusion of the uncle, and this was done without enquiry into the fact of adoption or nomination as though it was an immaterial circumstance."*

Bentinck had no right to interfere in the affairs of this principality by upsetting the adoption of the successor to the throne made by its late ruler. His object seems to have been to create confusion and distractions in that state and then to annex it on the ostensible plea that it could not manage its own affairs! In recognising Raghunath Rao, the deceased Raja's uncle, it was said:

"It being presumed that he is able to establish his authority, and that his succession will be acknowledged by disinterested parties at Jhansi."†

This action of Bentinck in upsetting and not recognising the adoption of the successor to the throne of Jhansi made by its late Raja served as a precedent to Dalhousie in annexing that state in 1853.

Again in 1834, Lord Bentinck declined to interfere in favor of Malhar Rao Holkar's adopted son at Indore. He instructed the British Resident at Indore not to be present at the installation, or to confer the khillut of honor upon the young Raja. The Secretary to Government wrote to the Resident at Indore:

"There would appear to be three individuals whose pretensions to the sovereignty might be alleged with some colour of right,...His Lordship in Council is not prepared to pronounce upon the relative superiority of these claims. The decision may fairly be left to the voice of the country, and our duty will be to maintain whatever arrangement may appear to be unequivocally consonant to the general wish."

Regarding this action of Bentinck, Sir George Clerk, the then Governor of Bombay, said that,

"the inconsistency, caprice, and mutability of our opinions regarding all great principles, is the bane of our supremacy in India."

The Afghanistan imbroglio and disasters of 1839-1842, the subsequent unjustifiable wars in Sindh and Panjab and also the annexation of those two provinces, were in no small measure due to the part which Bentinck played in the scheme which was euphemistically called the navigation of the Indus.§ The real author of this scheme

* Jhansi Blue Book, p. 18.

† Jhansi Blue Book, p. 17.

§ It was Moorcroft who first suggested the navigation of the Indus. Captain Cunningham, in his *History of the Sikhs* (first edition. p. 205), writes:

"The traveller Moorcroft had been impressed with the use which might be made of the Indus as a channel of British commerce, and the scheme of navigating that river and its tributaries was eagerly adopted by the Indian Government, and by the advocates of material utilitarianism. One object of sending King William's presents for Runjeet Singh by water, was to ascertain, as if undesignedly, the trading value of the classical stream, and the result of Lieutenant Burnes' observations convinced Lord William Bentinck of its superiority over the Ganges. There seemed also, in his Lordship's opinion, good reason to believe that the Great Western Valley had at one time been as populous as that of the East, and it was thought that the judicious exercise of the paramount influence of the British Government, might remove those political obstacles which had banished commerce from the rivers of Alexander. It was therefore resolved, in the current language of the day, to open the Indus to the navigation of the world."

was Malcolm. Its genesis was the "Memoranda on the North-Western Frontier of British India, and on the importance of the River Indus, as connected with its defence, drawn up by desire of Sir John Malcolm." This document was considered by the authorities of the East India Company, as well as by Bentinck. Some extracts from this State document, which was pregnant with such momentous consequences, are given below:

"Should ever an enemy appear on our N. W. Frontier, the possession of Sinde will become a point of the utmost importance to British interests in India, as *commanding the navigation of the Indus ;* a position in case of such an event occurring, of vital consequence to the defence of the country. A perfectly unrestricted communication on this river, can never be expected to be conceded us by the Court of Hydrabad......The possession of Hydrabad may consequently become the object of the British Government—that effected, it is presumed, that very efficient measures might be taken to secure the free passage of the Indus. The execution would not appear to present any serious difficulties—the routes upon Hydrabad (as will be shewn) are very practicable ; the fortifications of that Capital are insignificant ; "The Seik" is the only foreign adjacent power—from the organization of his Government, the disposibility of his force, and his political discrimination, whose jealousy of our encroachment we need fear or propitiate ; and the disjointed texture of the Scindian Force and Government, while it prevented union in those who opposed us, would afford us ample means of coercing any refractory chiefs, and of converting many into grateful allies, by substituting a liberal and beneficent rule, for the grinding tyranny of the Ameers."

Of course, the annexation of Sindh was plainly hinted at in the above document.

Bentinck played the part of Machiavelli in the Navigation of the Indus Affair. Metcalfe as a member of the Council of Bentinck raised his voice of protest against this measure.

In a minute dated October 1830, Metcalfe condemned the contemplated Survey of the Indus. He wrote:

"The scheme of surveying the Indus, under the pretence of sending a present to Raja Ranjit Singh seems to me highly objectionable.

"It is a trick, in my opinion, unworthy of our Government, which cannot fail when detected, as most probably it will be, to excite the jealousy and indignation of the powers on whom we play it.

"It is just such a trick as we are often falsely suspected and accused of by the native powers of India and this confirmation of their suspicions, generally unjust, will do us more injury by furnishing the ground of merited reproach, than any advantage to be gained by the measure can compensate. . . .

"It must be remembered that the survey of the Indus or any part of the Sindh country may give us the power to injure that State, may even assist us in conquering it, and in the course of events is as likely to be turned to use for that purpose as for any other. The rulers of Sind, therefore, have the same right to be jealous of our surveys of their river and their territories that any power of Europe has to protect its fortresses from the inspection of foreign engineers.

"It is stated in a late despatch from the Secret Committee that we must not permit the rulers of Sind to obstruct our measures , in other words, that we are to go to war with them to compell submission to our wishes. With deference I should remark that such an assumption does not seem to be warranted by the law of nations. . . . .But the assumption is an exemplification of what I have often observed in our conduct towards the Native States, and what appears to me the greatest blot in the character of our Indian policy, although I am not aware that it has attracted any general notice in England, However much we may profess moderation and non-interference when we have no particular interests of our own concerned, the moment we discover any object of pursuit we become impatient and over-bearing, insist on what we require and cannot brook

denial or hesitation. We disregard the rights of others, and think only of our own convenience. Submission or war is the alternative which the other party has to choose."

"Thus at the present time, because we have taken alarm at the supposed designs of Russia, it would seem that we are to compel intermediate States to enter into our views or submit to our projects, although they cannot comprehend them, and instead of entertaining any apprehension of Russian designs, are more apprehensive of our own, our character for encroachment being worse than that of the Russians, because the States concerned have a more proximate sense of it from the result which they see in actual operation among the realms of India . . .

"Among other uncertainties of this great question, is that of what our own conduct ought to be when the expected crisis shall arise. Whether we should meet the enemy half-way and fight the battle in foreign countries—whether we should defend the passage of the Indus and make our stand there, or await the foe on our own frontier, and force on him all the labor, and loss, and risk of coming the whole distance before we attack him—must depend so much on the disposition of intermediate countries, and other circumstances of the time that it seems utterly vain to determine even our own course at this remote distance from the event . . .

"If, therefore, I were asked what is best to be done with a view to a Russian invasion, I should say that it is best to do nothing until time shall show us what we ought to do, because there is nothing that we can do in our present blind state that would be of any certain benefit on the approach of that event. . . .

"The only thing certain is, that we ought not to want only to offend intermediate States by acts calculated to arouse hostile feelings against us, but ought rather to cultivate a friendly disposition. . . .

"No rulers have ever shown their jealousy of us more decidedly than the Ameers of Sind, which feeling we are about to stimulate afresh by an act which will justify its past existence, and perpetuate its continuance.

"If the information wanted is indispensable, and cannot be obtained by fair and open means, it ought, I conceive, to be sought by the usual mode of sending unacknowledged emissaries, and not by a deceitful application for a passage under the fictitious presence of one purpose when the real object is another, which we know would not be sanctioned."*

In a minute dated June 2, 1833, Metcalfe wrote :

"It does not appear to me that the establishment of a British agent at Caubul is requisite or desirable in any point of view.

"The professed object of the proposal is the improvement of commerce. I believe that commerce will take care of itself best without our direct interference in the form of a Commercial Agency ; and, if we sought to remove existing obstacles, our efforts would be more needed elsewhere than at Caubul, where the trade with India already receives every possible encouragement.

"A commercial agent would unavoidably become, from the time of his creation, a political agent. To the extension of our political relations beyond the Indus there appears to me to be great objections. From such a course I should expect the probable occurrence of embarassments and wars, expensive and unprofitable at the least, without any equivalent benefit, if not ruinous and destructive.

"The appointment of an agent at Caubul would of itself almost amount to an interference in the political affairs of Afghanistan. . . . . .

"As a commercial measure, I consider the one proposed to be unnecessary ; as a political one, undesirable ; and therefore, on the whole objectionable."†

* Kaye's *Selections from the Writings of Lord Metcalfe,* pp. 211-217.

† *Ibid.,* p. 218.

Kaye writes that

"The survey of the Indus and the Commercial Agency at Caubul were the *prolegomena*, so to speak, of the great epic of the Afghan War; and Metcalfe, in his correspondence both with Lord William Bentinck and Lord Auckland, argued and protested, with equal sagacity and earnestness, against measures which could hardly fail to entangle us in such a manner with the Trans-Indian States as eventually to evolve a great and calamitous war. He left India at a most unfortunate conjuncture. His services were never so much needed as at the time of his departure."*

Metcalfe wrote :

"We could not long exist in a state of adequate preparation, as we should be utterly ruined by the expense."**

The navigation of the Indus was ostensibly undertaken for the purpose of presenting a coach and horses to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Writes Prinsep :

"It was resolved to make the transmission of this present, a means of obtaining information in regard to the Indus, and the facilities, or the contrary, it might offer to navigation . . . The dray horses were accordingly sent out to Bombay, and the Supreme Government instructed Sir John Malcolm, the Governor of that presidency, to take measures to have them forwarded under charge of an intelligent and prudent officer, in boats up the Indus. Some demur was anticipated on the part of the rulers of Sindh to allowing them passage through the Delta and lower part of the river; but it was assumed that the governing Mirs, situated as they were relatively to Runjeet Singh on the one hand, and the British Government on the other, would not readily incur the risk of offending both powers, by refusing a passage altogether, if it were insisted upon."†

But Bentinck had his designs on the provinces of the Panjab and Sindh and so he paid no heed to the warning voice of Metcalfe.††

It was because he had his eye on Sindh, that he stood in the way of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's attempt in adding that province to his dominions. The treaty which was concluded with Ranjit Singh by the Government of India in 1809 expressly stipulated

* *Ibid.*, p. 219.

** *Ibid.*, p. 199.

† Origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab and Political Life of Maharaja Runjeet Singh, Chapter X.

†† "The main and great aim of Government, is declared to be to open the Indus. Was the Indus ever closed or, farther closed than by its dangerous entrances and shallow depth of water ? Another obiect was to open the countries on and beyond the Indus to commerce. Were they also ever closed ? No such thing; they carried on an active, and increasing trade with India and afforded markets for immense quantities of British manufactured goods. The Governments of India and of England, as well as the public at large, were never amused and deceived by a greater fallacy than that of opening the Indus, as regarded commercial objects. The results of the policy concealed under this pretext have been the introduction of troops into the countries on and beyond the river, and of some half a dozen steamers on the stream itself, employed for warlike objects, not for those of trade. There is, besides, great absurdity in commercial treaties with the states of Central Asia, simply because there is no occasion for them. From ancient and prescribed usage, moderate and fixed duties are levied; trade is perfectly free; no goods are prohibited, and the more extensive the commerce carried on the greater advantage to the State. Where, then, the benefit of commercial treaties?" Manson's *Travels*, Vol. III, p. 432.

How Bentinck threatened the Amirs of Sind with the loss of their independence if they would not allow the navigation of the Indus by the British ships, has been thus related by M. Victor

that that sovereign was not to be hampered in his operations on any country beyond the Sutlej. So Lord Bentinck violated the Treaty when he forbade Ranjit Singh from acquiring Sindh.*

The meeting at Rupar, in the latter end of 1831, of Bentinck with Ranjit Singh, was a covert attempt to spy out the military strength of Ranjit Singh.

Regarding this meeting, the celebrated French traveller, Victor Jacquemont, in one of his letters to his brother, wrote:

"It is not merely a magnificent embassy that the British Government now talk of sending to Runjeet Sing; the Governor-General desires to have a personal interview with the Maharaia. My friend Wade is returned to Lahore, to negotiate the etiquette at the meeting of the two stars of the East. They are counting steps and half steps and regulating beforehand the insignificant sentences which they are to exchange, &c. This is a very grave affair; and I do not think Wade will manage it well. The high contracting parties, as they say, have irreconcilable or incompatible pretensions, which form the subject of parley at the present time. What Lord William wants with Runjeet Singh, I am unable to guess,—to frighten him, perhaps and show him how easy it would be to annihilate him. The Colonel of one of the two regiments of English cavalry in the Calcutta Presidency writes to me from Simla that he has been appointed to command, not the escort, but the army, which is to accompany the Governor-General to his interview with Runjeet, if it take place: or the embassy to Lahore, in the reverse case."†

According to John Malcolm Ludlow (*British India*, Vol. II, p. 97):

"At this interview was decided the question of the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan by Shah Sooja, a British pensioner at Loodiana, who, in January 1833, with a few hundred followers, set out for the invasion of Afghanistan. as it appeared by a treaty concluded two months later with the countenance of Ranjit Singh. His followers soon swelled to 30,000; he defeated the Ameers of Scinde, and moved on towards Candahar, but was in turn defeated by Dost Mahommed and had eventually to return a fugitive to Loodiana (1834). It is only in connection with subsequent events that the expedition has some importance."

Ranjit Singh threw all precautions away and did not hesitate to meet Bentinck at Rupar. On a previous occasion, when he had sent presents to Lord Amherst at Simla, the British Commander-in-Chief, Lord Combermere, who passed the warm season at Simla in 1828, desired to procure an invitation in person to Lahore, but then Ranjit

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Jacquemont in one of his letters, dated December 15th, 1831, to one M. Prosper Marimee of Paris:—

"The Ameers of Sind . . . . . . have been independent ever since the dissolution of the Afghan Empire. For these twenty years past, Runjeet Singh has been coveting their country and would long ago have seized it, had he not dreaded the displeasure of the British. The Ameers have just been informed that if they do not afford every facility and protection to the commercial and military navigation of the British on the Indus, they will be left to Runjeet Singh's tender mercy. They have hastened to reply that they are the submissive slaves of the old lady of London. and that it will be their pleasure as well as duty to establish dockyards on the banks of their river for the British steam-vessels." P. 221, Vol. II, of M. Jacquemont's Letters from India.

* Captain Cunningham, in the seventh chapter of his History of the Sikhs, has dwelt at great length on this subject. One of the causes which provoked the Sikh War was the fact that the English to possess Sindh themselves had, during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Bentinck, made use of every stratagem, artifice and excuse to prevent Ranjeet Singh from acquiring, or extending his power over, Sindh.

† Jacquemont's *Letters from India*, London, 1834, Vol. II. p. 111.

Singh evaded compliance with this wish.* But the Sikh sovereign, addicted to hard drink and debauchery, was losing his strong common sense, for which he was noted, and being easily seduced by the presents received from Bentinck, unhesitatingly acceded to the latter's wish and met him with all the pageantry of the East at Rupar†

The meeting at Rupar made Ranjit Singh disgusted with the English Government. Jacquemont wrote to his friend, M. Victor De Tracy of Paris, from Delhi, on January 11th, 1832:

"There is a coolness between Runjeet Sing and us—I mean the Government. The British wish to occupy the Lower Indus, and push their trade in that direction. They will unquestionably be obliged to establish military posts on the banks, in order to protect it. Hence the ill temper of Runjeet, who cannot resist and is forced to suffer what he cannot prevent."

"That which he allowed me last year out of compliment to the Governor-General, he would no doubt refuse me now."**

It is said that Bentinck was not very favourably impressed with that Sikh sovereign and hence the contemptuous manner with which he treated him, and the conspiracy was laid during Bentinck's regime to subvert the Sikh Raj. Of this conspiracy, we read in the evidence of Captain Macan before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company on 22nd, March, 1832:

"1446. An idea has been broached that great additional security would result to our Eastern empire from the extension of our frontier to the Indus; is that a subject you have considered?—Yes, I have frequently considered it.

"1447. What is the result of your opinion?—I have heard many military men say that the Indus was our natural boundary in India; but it has been proved by late and former wars, that a river like the Indus is little or no obstruction to a well-organised invading army, and if we are to have a defensible boundary on that side, we should do more than stop at the Indus, we should push our posts into the hills, fastnesses and passes which are beyond that river; but I hold that the conquest of the Punjab (which is the country between the Indus and the Sutlej, upon which latter river our frontier posts are now stationed) would be highly impolitic and unjust. We already possess more territory than we seem capable of governing well. The chief of that state has been on amicable terms with us since the treaty made with him in 1808, the cause of that treaty was an attempt on his part to conquer the Seik Chiefs east of the Sutlej, and the purport of it (which has been faithfully observed by both parties since that period) was that he should not interfere east of that river, nor we to the west of it. The consequence has been, that he has gradually extended his conquests over the whole of Cashmere, Mooltan, and latterly Peshawar; his territory is extensive, populous and fertile, his army numerous and efficient, perhaps the best native army in India, with the exception of the British. Again, it would be impolitic to extend our frontier in that quarter, as it would bring us in direct collision with the Afghans, one of the bravest, most bigoted, and fanatical of all the Mahomedan tribes. Now, it is well known that the Seiks are neither Mahomedans nor Hindoos, but admit converts of both, though their religion has infinitely more of the Hindoo in it than the Mahomedan; they are therefore a wonderful barrier between us and those fanatical tribes, with whom if we were to come in collision, it would unquestionably have a dangerous influence on the religious prejudices of our Mahomedan subjects and troops."

* Prinsep's *Runjeet Singh*, 9th Chapter.

† There is a very good account of the meeting at Rupar in *Memoirs of Colonel Skinner* (Vol. II. pp. 206 *et seq.*)

** *Ibid.*, p. 755.

Of this conspiracy we read in Baron Hugel's *Travels* :*

"Several articles had appeared of late in the newspapers of Hindustan and of Calcutta, which went to show that the English must of necessity soon march to the Indus, and make that river the Western boundary of British India, and I fancied that Runjeet Singh had thought a good deal of these articles."

Bentinck did nothing to allay the alarm into which Ranjit Singh was thrown by all these writings in the Calcutta papers, which were of course all inspired by the Governor-General or his subordinates in office. It was the policy of the Company of which Bentinck was the representative not to make any alliance with Ranjit Singh, for Baron Hugel wrote :

"A treaty offensive and defensive with the British Government, having a guarantee for the integrity of his possessions, was the only thing that could ensure the dominion of Ranjit Singh. But this would have prevented England from taking immediate advantage of any sudden occurence which might fall out."†

Such was Bentinck's foreign policy. He annexed Kurg and Kachar; he interfered needlessly with the affairs of the kingdom of Oudh was made use of by those who favored the extinction of that kingdom. He unnecessarily humiliated and insulted the king of Delhi. He tried his best to exterminate the independent existence of the Maratha State of Gwalior. He approved of and countenanced, for he made no protest against, the navigation of the Indus, which laid the foundation of all the troubles in Afghanistan, Panjab and Sindh.

In the face of the above-mentioned facts, it is nothing less than travesty of truth to say that Bentinck was a peace-loving, honest and straight-forward man in his dealings with the native powers of Hindustan.

In addition to his post of Governor-General, Bentinck was also Commander-in-Chief in India. The *Meerut Universal Magazine* for 1835, in reviewing his career in the latter capacity, wrote as follows :

"A more unfit person for a Commander-in-Chief than Lord William Bentinck it would have been difficult for any Ministry to pitch upon, nor does it reflect credit upon the Court of Directors, the Board of Control, or his Majesty' Government, that for the sake of effecting a saving of some six or seven thousand pounds a year, the welfare and discipline of an Army . . . . should have been risked, or their interests sacrificed.

"The first acts of Lord William Bentinck on assuming the command of the Army were taken with a view to reflect disgrace on the rule of his predecessor, and in pursuance of this system all descriptions of complaints were not only received but fostered at headquarters, squabbles long set at rest were carefully raked from their ashes—nourished into representation, enquiries and courts martial, and the curious observer will find, that a large majority of the causes submitted to the decision of the military tribunals, were manufactured out of the disputes that occurred in the time of Sir Edward Barnes. . . . .His Lordship loved to live in an atmosphere of complaints, and so long as he received a due quantity, considered that the Army must be progressing to a state of improvement.

"With a man so singularly lauded for benevolence and humanity as Lord William Bentinck was, it is extraordinary how many acts we find that would lead the *casual observer* to a belief, that his

p. 334.
(P. 409.)

Lordship was swayed by a selfish disregard of every one but himself or his immediate parasites. . . .

"Lord William is very fond of Rupees—Lord William loved the Rupees."

In the administration of domestic affairs Bentinck did little to promote the interests of the natives of India. Indeed, some of his measures were best calculated to make the natives miserable and keep them in subjection. Before his time, the executive and judicial functions were not combined in the same individual. But he combined them. That this measure has been a great curse to the people of Hindustan is evident from the fact that the Indian National Congress from its very birth has been praying for the separation of judicial and executive functions—a request which that astute Irish Viceroy; Lord Dufferin, pronounced to be "a counsel of perfection."

Lord William Bentinck resumed rent-free lands. Wrote the *Meerut Universal Magazine* : *

"By an old regulation of Government, no persons holding *lakhiraj* or rent-free lands could be deprived of them, until a proper judicial investigation had been instituted on his claim, and a *final* decree past by the Supreme Court. Soon after Lord William Bentinck's arrival in India, this regulation was repealed, and the Collector was authorised to dispossess the holder of such tax-free lands, by his own authority, without reference to any judicial inquiry, if the Collector should be ot opinion after such inquiry as might *satisfy* himself, that the title of the proprietor was invalid. It is therein enacted (Sec. I. Art. I) that 'such decision of the Collector shall have the force and effect of a decree,' also that it shall not be necessary for him to transmit his proceedings to the Board of Revenue,' but that 'the party dispossessed might appeal, and by Art, 3 whether an appeal be filed or not, 'that it shall and may be lawful,' for the Collector immediately to carry into effect his decision by attaching and assessing the lands'. . . . .

"Only imagine, an English Collector of taxes, summoning the head of the Portland family to produce his title to the estates he now holds, and 'satisfying himself that the title is invalid,, proceeds immediately to carry into effect *his* decision, by attaching and assessing the lands.' . . . .Yet such an act has Lord William Bentinck perpetrated on the natives of India, on a people he declares to be oppressed and degraded, showing throughout, a cunning and hypocrisy, at which his countrymen must blush. The regulation was public, the suspension of the regulation was public ; but the last orders for carrying the original regulation into effect *secret*. Thus, by a measure more arbitrary than any that can be found in the History of the darkest ages of our own country, have families, that were in comparative affluence, been hurled into the depths of poverty, hundreds and thousands, who considered themselves beyond the reach of adversity. cast upon the world to seek their bread.

"This is what Lord William Bentinck has done for India."

Bentinck did not want the existence of an Indian aristocracy. Therefore he favoured the resumption of estates whose owners died without male issue. It was with reference to this that Malcolm, on the eve of his retirement from the office of Governor of Bombay, wrote in his farewell Minute of 30th November, 1830 :

"I have endeavoured through life (and shall as long as I am employed) to mitigate what I deem the evil effects produced by a cold and inflexible policy, which, substituting in all cases attention to principles for consideration of persons, runs counter to the feelings and usages of natives. I know the change must take place; but I desire it should be gradual, and I cannot convince myself that either our financial or political interest will be promoted by the adoption of measures that consign to early extinction the family of the jagheerdar of Vinchoor, or that of a man of rank and character like Balla Sahib Rastia, or Rajah Bahadoor, and several others belonging to

* Vol. I, p. 12.

that class, *whose estates it is the opinion of the Right honourable the Governor-General in Council should be resumed*............. I think it is to be regretted these chiefs were ever placed in possession of estates not intended to be conferred on their heirs according to the laws and usages of their tribes; or when this was done, that it was not specifically stated in their grants that no collateral succession or adoption would in any case be admitted, and a resolution taken never to deviate from the rule laid down."*

His great aim was to anglicise and denationalise the natives of India. He did not conceal it : because he came to believe that the anglicisation of India would be of material advantage to England. With this object, among others, in view, he tried his best to introduce English as the court language in India. (*Vide* passages quoted from blue books in *The Modern Review* for February, 1910, pp. 177-179,)

Knowing the views and opinions of Bentinck, Macaulay also did not hesitate to side with the Anglicists and wrote that minute which made English the medium of instruction in India. That minute considerably retarded the growth of the vernaculars of India.

In my *History of Education in India under the rule of the East India Company*† I have stated that Bentinck of set purpose selected Macaulay to decide the very important controversy between the occidentalists and orientalists. That brilliant English essayist's Minute on Education is a counterpart of William Thackeray's Minute, from which an extract has already been given before. Both the minutes were penned with the object of "suppressing deep thought" amongst Indians and were most probably inspired by Bentinck.

In the chapter on the Mutiny at Vellore extracts have been given from the Revd. Mr. Sydney Smith's article in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1807 to show the encouragement afforded by Bentinck to Christian Missionaries to convert the "heathens" of India. The introduction of English education in this country was conceived with the same object in view. Macaulay looked upon it as a step that would lead to the conversion of Indians to Christianity. Thus in 1836, Macaulay wrote to his father :

"It is my firm belief if our plans of education are followed up there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence."

Commenting on the above, the *Indian Daily News* for March 30, 1909 wrote :

"Lord Macaulay's triumph...was really the triumph of a deliberate intention to undermine the religious and social life of India......how behind his splendid phrases, there lay quite a different view."

Bentinck was thwarted from accomplishing his purpose in Madras by the outbreak at Vellore and his subsequent recall. As Governor-General, he tried to carry into execution his long-cherished intention and so appointed Macaulay, the youngest of his councillors and without any personal experience of Indian life, to preside over the committee of Anglicists and orientalists.

Bentinck did all that lay in his power to give impetus to the settlement and

* Vol. VI—Political or Foreign Minutes of Evidence before the Parliamentary Committee of 1832. (The italics are ours).

† Pp. 83, *et seq.*

colonization in India of his co-religionists and compatriots. The free resort of his countrymen to India would lead, he thought, to the Anglicisation of the natives, which would be advantageous to England.

He is considered to be a great philanthropist, because he passed that act which prevented the immolation of widows, known as *Suttee.* Of course, it was the right thing to do. But the ground had been paved, as it were, for him by the writings of Raja Ram Mohun Roy. If the credit is mainly due to anybody for the abolition of *Suttee,* it is to Ram Mohun Roy.* Bentinck was obliged to him, for it was not Bentinck but Ram Mohun Roy who was the object of obloquy and the target for ridicule and attack of the Hindus; for they knew that without the powerful aid of Ram Mohun, Bentinck would not and could not have ventured to enact the abolition of Suttee. But such was the sense of gratitude possesssed by Bentinck that he put obstacles in the way of Ram Mohun Roy's proceeding to England as ambassador of the King of Delhi and did not recognise the title of Raja which the Mugal King had honoured him with.

It is said that Bentinck was a freind of the natives, because he recognised their claims to more extensive employment in the service of the State and for the posts of Deputy Collectors created during his regime. It was not from any philanthropic considerations that the natives were more widely employed. It was financial necessity which obliged the authorities to resort to native agency;—the same necessity which led to the curtailment of the *batta* of the civil and military officers and which made Bentinck so unpopular with his countrymen in India.

By right, all the appointments in the public services of India belong to the natives, because they are the children of the soil and also the taxpayers. Even if Bentinck employed them more extensively, we do not see any reason why he should be thanked or considered a philanthropist for merely meting out a little justice to them.†

It should be remembered that Bentinck was no advocate of high education in India. This will be gathered from the following from the Minute of Sir Charles Metcalfe, dated the 16th May, 1835:

"His Lordship (Bentinck). however, sees further danger in the spread of knowledge and the

* Lieutenant A. White, a contemporary of Ram Mohun Roy, writes in his "Considerations on the State of British India," pp. 60-91 :

"This enlightened Hindoo Ram Mohun has rendered a signal service to his countrymen in exposing the cruelty and injustice of the practice which condemns a widow to sacrifice herself on the funeral pile of her husband;. . . ."

† Prof. H. H. Wilson, in his continuation of Mill's *History of British India* in a footnote in Book III. Chapter VI. writes :

"Regulation V. 1831. The credit of this enactment has sometimes been given exclusively to Lord Bentinck; but this is an injustice. That his Lordship unreservedly admitted the principle, and zealously carried into practice the employment of respectable natives in the administration of public affairs, is undoubtedly true, but the justice and necessity of the measure had been fully recognised, both in India and England, long before Lord W. Bentinck's appointment; and the provisions of the Regulation here cited were based, as mentioned in the Regulation, upon the suggestions and orders of the Court of Directors, prior to the arrival in India of the actual Governor-General."

operations of the Press. I do not, for my own part, anticipate danger as a certain consequence from these causes."

Regarding the credit given to Lord Bentinck for the liberty of the press, the *Meerut Universal Magazine* (Vol. I. 119) wrote:

"There are men, perhaps, who may tell us that the Indian community should be thankful for the miscalled liberty allowed during the rule of Lord William Bentinck. If any such can be found, shame on them, for spaniel like, they would lick the hand that chastised. Lord William Bentinck dared not to attack the press !

"Had he raised his finger against the Indian Press, he would have been hooted by his constituents on his return to England ! His expectations from the party with which he is allied, (together with his political reputation, small as it is,) were greater than those of a pension from the East India Company ! ! ! For these reasons he dared not ; had he not dreaded an exposure in England his Lordship would not have hesitated for an instant in the course to be pursued. But times were changed since his Lordship governed the Madras Presidency, and let the reader contrast the conduct of Lord William Bentinck, in refusing permission to Sir William Gwillim to publish his address to a jury, an address written by a Judge, an address spoken by that Judge when presiding on the judgement seat of the highest tribunal, with the same Lord William's false pretensions to popular esteem, held forth while in Bengal.

"It is necessary in my opinion, for the public safety, that the press in India should be kept *under the most rigid control.* It matters not from what pen the dangerous matter may issue, the higher the authority the greater the mischief." (Lord William Bentinck at Madras.)

"This is the language of the man, who 'knew no subject which the press might not freely discuss,' this is the man who for seven years induced the Indian European community to believe that they were enjoying freedom of discussion ; the man who duped them with the shadow for the substance ; yet the man, who in the words of Sir James Mackintosh, well knew "that to inform the public of the conduct of those who administer public affairs, requires courage and *conscious security.* If it is not done boldly, it cannot be done effectually ; and it is not from writers trembling under the up-lifted scourge, that we are to hope for a proper discharge of the duty."

The Governor-General's view regarding the acceleration of communications between England and India was that by this "the natives of India in person would be enabled to bring their complaints and grievances before the authorities and the country," .... and by which "disinterested travellers would have it in their power to report to their country at home the nature and circumstances of this distant portion of the Empire." The result, he trusted, would be "to rouse the shameful apathy and indifference of Great Britain to the concerns of India."*

But there is a difference between what Bentinck professed and what he practised. Had he been sincere in the view expressed above he would have treated Ram Mohun Roy's mission to England on behalf of the Mugal Emperor of Delhi, or, that of the King of Oudh quite differently from what he did.

That Bentinck's seven years' rule from 1828-1835 was on the whole beneficial to the natives of the country is a myth. His foreign policy was aggressive and his domestic policy destructive of the best interests of the children of the soil.

* (Ludlow's *British India,* Vol. II, pp. 98-99).

CHAPTER LXVIII

REFLECTIONS ON THE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S CHARTER OF 1833

It was during the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck, that the Charter of the East India Company was renewed in 1833. A few reflections on that Charter are given below.

The early thirties of the nineteenth century were very stirring times in England. It was not any war or prospect of it that created the stir, but it was due to domestic causes. Industrial development had taken place to such a large extent, the urban population had so largely increased, education also was making such rapid strides, that Parliamentary Reform became absolutely necessary. Hence the Reform Bill was on the legislative anvil. But political reforms in England did not auger good for India. No greater mistaken notion can be entertained than the theory broached by the late Mr. R. C. Dutt when he said that

"the administration of India is determined by the current of opinions in England, that progress in India is stimulated by English progress, and that the history of India under British rule is shaped by those great influences which make for reforms in Europe. This is a fact which is often overlooked by the historians of India, but Indian history is unintelligible to us without this explanation. From the time of the great Pitt to the time of Mr. Gladstone, English influences have inspired the rulers of India. English history and Indian history have run in parallel streams."

No, just the reverse of the above is true. The interests of the people of England are not identical with but diametrically opposed to, those of the people of this country. Their interests and our interests clash. Hence there can be no community of interests between the English and the Indian. So the more power the common people of England obtained, they did not turn it to account for the benefit of the natives of India but for their own gain. Sir John Malcolm, in his Political History of India, writes :

"It has been well observed by an able anonymous author, who has written a history of the early period of the East India Company, that unlimited power in the hands of a single person may be prevented from degenerating into acts of tyranny by the terrors of ignominy, or by personal fears. But a body of men vested with authority, is seldom swayed by restraint of either kind ; as they derive, individually, but little applause from their best measures, so the portion of infamy which may fall to each for the worst public action is too small to affect personal character. Having therefore, no generous inducement to follow virtue, the most sordid passions frequently lead them into vice. It is from this circumstance that the decisions of public bodies sometimes partake of that mortifying species of tyranny which is incapable of redress, and yet is beyond revenge. These observations may be applied, without the least injustice, to the actions of the Indian Company both at home and abroad. Avarice, the most obstinate and hardened passion of the human mind, being the first principle of commerce, was the original bond of their union, and humanity, justice and even policy, gave way to the prospect or love of gain."*

The Political History of India, 3rd (1826) edition, pp. 21-22.

Regarding the Reform Act of 1832, Mr. John Morley in his Life of Mr. Cobden writes that it

"stirred up social aspirations which the Liberal Governments of the next ten years after the passing of the Act, were utterly unable to satisfy."

If we remember the above, we shall be able to understand that the Charter Act of 1833 following on the Reform Act of 1832 was more advantageous to the people of England than to those of India. Of course, on the occasion of the passing of that Act, much cant and idle talk were indulged in by those who professed radical views. The most noteworthy of these talkers was Mr. Thomas Babington (afterwards Lord) Macaulay. Very noble thoughts are embodied in the speech which he delivered from his place in the House of Commons on the 10th of July, 1833. Macaulay was the only son of his father Zachariah Macaulay, a friend of William Wilberforce and the *Christian* Director of the East India Company, Mr. Charles Grant. T. B. Macaulay, from his very infancy, having come in contact with Mr. Charles Grant, must have imperceptibly, but silently and steadily, imbibed the latter's views on Indian questions. For Macaulay's famous speech of 1833 is in many respects almost a paraphrase, although in eloquent phrases, of Mr. Grant's pamphlet on the State of Society in Asia. Macaulay said :

"To the great trading nation, to the great manufacturing nation, no progress which any portion of the human race can make in knowledge, in taste for the conveniences of life or in the wealth by which those conveniences are produced, can be matter of indifference. It is scarcely possible to calculate the benefit which we might derive from the diffusion of European civilisation among the vast population of the East. ... To trade with civilised men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages."

Compare the above with what Mr. Charles Grant wrote in the pamphlet above referred to. He wrote :

"In every progressive step of this work, we shall also serve the original design with which we visited India, that design still so important to this country,—the extension of our commerce. Why is it that so few of our manufactures and commodities are vended there? Not merely because the taste of the people is not generally formed to the use of them, but because they have not the means of purchasing them. Let invention be once awakened among them,...let them acquire a relish...for the beauties and refinements, endlessly diversified, of European art and science, and we shall hence obtain for ourselves the supply of four and twenty millions of distant subjects. How greatly will our country be thus aided in rising still superior to all her difficulties; and how stable, as well as unrivalled, may we hope our commerce will be, when we thus rear it on right principles, and make it the means of their extension?.. and wherever, we may venture to say, our principles and language are introduced, our commerce will follow." *

It was Mr. Grant's idea to teach the natives of India the English language, for it would be politically advantageous to England. Similar thoughts dominated Macaulay's advocacy of making English the medium of instruction in this country.

But Macaulay was not sincere when he grandiloquently said:

"Are we to keep the people of India ignorant in order that we may keep them submissive? Or

* General Appendix to Report from Select Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, London, 1832, page 88.

do you think that we can give them knowledge without awakening ambition? Or do we mean to awaken ambition and to provide it with no legitimate vent? Who will answer any of these questions in the affirmative? Yet one of them must be answered in the affirmative, by every person who maintains that we ought permanently to exclude the natives from high office......

"It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system; that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government; that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or retard it."

Regarding Macaulay, Mr. Digby in his *Prosperous British India*, truly writes:

"The climax is reached by Thomas Babington Macaulay, the Member for Leeds, who was in himself—as Law Member in India, as Member of Parliament afterwards—to show that much of what he said was of the tongue merely and not of the heart."

Macaulay was one of those regarding whom Sir Bartle Frere, Governor of Bombay, said:

"Many of them are anxious for the improvement of the natives, provided it be effected in their own—the European fashion; but not one of them I ever met has a particle of real sympathy with any native who does not belong to the small anglicised class."

On Macaulay should be fathered the phrase "benevolent despotism," on which principle, according to him, the British administration of India should be conducted. He wrote:

"We know that India cannot have a free government. But she may have the next best thing—a firm and impartial despotism."

But Macaulay said justly that:

"Of all forms of tyranny I believe the worst is that of a nation over a nation."

President Abraham Lincoln wrote:

"There is no man good enough to govern another man. It is equally true that there is no nation good enough to govern another nation."

A German author has also observed:

"The weight of a foreign yoke .....is more than ever galling if not supported upon a community of interests. The strong aversion which springs from the contact of characters fundamentally discordant can never be overcome even by consideration of the mutual advantages to be gained from the union, however great the advantages may be. Repugnance and animosity, purely sentimental in their origin, and impossible of suppression by any process of intellectual exercise, are influences as important in national as in individual life."

History of the World, Vol. VIII, p. 144.

So the phrase "benevolent despotism" has hardly any meaning.

The framers of the Charter Act of 1833, among whom Macaulay played a very prominent part, wanted to govern India on the principle of "benevolent despotism." *

* Of course much cant and nonsense is talked by those Britishers who say that England holds India in trust and for the benefit of the Indian people. Sir Bartle Frere in his convocation speech of the Bombay University in 1867 said:

"From the days of Clive and Warren Hastings to this hour, there has ever been a continued protest on the part of those who mould the thought and direct the action of the British nation,

One has to read carefully and between the lines of the above Act and he will be convinced that it was meant for the benefit of the people of England. This Act imposed on India very heavy financial burdens. India was already groaning under heavy taxes, but nothing was done to relieve her. It amplified and extended the provisions of the Charter Act of 1813 intended to benefit the Britishers. The framers of the Act having done so much for the welfare of their own co-religionists and compatriots, it was but natural for them to put on the mask of philanthropy to cover their ulterior designs. That mask of philanthropy is exhibited in section 87 of that Act. Of course they knew that it was not going to be given effect to.

This Act *intensified the impetus to the exploitation* of India. British India was then unable to pay the heavy expenses of the costly administration it was saddled with. Every year's budget showed a deficit. It was difficult to make both ends meet. Perhaps it was, therefore, that in a secret conclave of the honorable and Christian gentlemen who constituted the Liberal ministry of the day, the conspiracy to annihilate the then existing native principalities was hatched. We make this statement on the authority of General Briggs. In a letter to Major Evans Bell, dated 8th May 1872, Briggs wrote:

"But perhaps I ought not to attribute so much to the personal or free action of Lord Dalhousie, for I have good reason to believe that in Lord Auckland's time, long before the appointment of Lord Dalhousie, there was a conclave of Whig Ministers and magnates at Lord Lansdowne's place, Bowood, to discuss the policy of upholding or of absorbing the Native States, and it was decided that we should avail ourselves of all opportunities for adding to our territories and revenues at the expense of our allies and of stipendiary Princes like the Rajah of Tanjore and the Nawabs of the Carnatic and Bengal. In this direction the Bombay Government set the example by annexing the inconsiderable principality of Colaba, under the pretext that an adopted heir had no right of succession. This led the way to the more important and more impolitic cases, under Lord Dalhousie, of Jhansi and Nagpore. Dalhousie only acted on the policy prescribed by the Ministers in England." *Memoir of General John Briggs*, p. 277.

This only can satisfactorily account for the violation of the most sacred and solemn treaties which the British had entered into with the Native Princes of India, and also of that provision of the Charter Act of 1793 which solemnly declared:

"That to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India, are measures repugnant to the *wish, honour* and policy of the nation,"

From what we have already said it must be patent to all that the Charter Act of 1833, like its predecessor of 1813, was meant to circumscribe the liberties enjoyed by the Indian people, to make their lot heavy, and to saddle them with the imposition of new taxes. Clause 87 of this Act was merely a make-believe sort of thing, meant as a blind to cover the ulterior designs of the people of England in India.

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against the doctrine that India is to be administered in any other spirit than as a trust from God for the good government of many millions of His creatures."

A Christian judge of one of the Indian High Courts has recently said that India should be governed not in the interests of Indians but for those of Englishmen and that no one appointed the latter as trustors or trustees for Indians! India is a conquered country and therefore Indians have no rights and privileges.

The India Reform Society, founded in England, on Saturday, the 12th of March, 1853, issued from time to time, tracts on Indian subjects for the enlightenment of the people of England. The first tract which this Society issued was headed, "The Government of India since 1834." In it are brought together all the facts which prove that the East India Company did not govern India so well as to deserve to have its charter renewed in 1853. A few extracts from this tract are given below :

"The enquiry in hand, and the issue now raised by the effluxion of the Charter Act can not be better stated than in the language used by the late King. It denotes in the simplest terms, the purpose of the Statute—'the improvement and happiness of the natives of India, and by doing so it enables the country and the legislature to apply to its success or failure, tests of the most infallible description. For there is nothing in this world so patent and certain, and easily ascertainable as good government. . . . The first step in the enquiry is, therefore, to apply some of the tests of good government to the Government of India, as it has been administered under the system established in 1833.

"I. PEACE.

"Perhaps the most important of these tests is Peace....

"Now since 1834, the Government of India, as established in the preceding year, has, out of the ninteen years that have passed, been for fifteen of them in a state of war....

"These wars were not necessary for the safety,—they have retarded the improvement, and diminished the happiness of the Natives of India, whilst they have exhausted the resources of the Government : but they were the natural result of the system established in 1833 ; for it wanted the responsibility and the 'correctives' which alone keep human rulers at peace.

* * *

"Applying then, the test of Peace to the last twenty years, what opportunity, what means, what chances can a Government occupied more or less with war for fifteen of those years, have had of working out the improvement and the happiness of the Natives ?...

"II. FINANCES.

... Pecuniary Prosperity being the second great test of good Government everywhere.

"In England a deficit in the Treasury is the most heinous of all Government offences ...Turn to India, and what, during the last fourteen years, do we find ? Deficit—deficit—deficit.

"When the present system of Government was framed in 1833, the military charges of India were about eight millions sterling, or 49 per cent. of its net revenue. Twenty years of anticipated 'improvement and happiness' have now almost elapsed and the military charges now exceed twelve millions sterling and eat up 56 per cent. of the net revenue....These are the first results of the legislation of 1833, which arrest our path in clearing the way for legislation in 1853.

"III. MATERIAL IMPROVEMENTS.

"Of course, a system of government which in the last twenty years has gone on increasing its military expenditure from eight to twelve millions sterling, and thus adding to its debt, has had little to spend on what are, in such a country as India, the next evidence of good government—Public Works....So that out of a revenue exceeding 21 millions sterling the rate of Government expenditure on public works has, according to Mr. Campbell, been 2¼ per cent., or less than £500,000 a year, spread over a country as large as Europe. .."And of these sums so debited against public works, some portion is, it must be borne in mind, spent on barracks and purely military undertakings. The figures, too, include the cost of superintendence, which has some times wasted 70 per cent. of the outlay.

"IV. CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

"But, in spite of war, deficit and want of roads, bridges, harbours, and public works,—in spite of this, the condition of the People may have improved during the last twenty years ? Try the Act of 1833, then by this test. There can be none better or surer."

The writer then goes on to show from official accounts the miserable condition of the Bengal ryot under the Zemindary system—the Madras ryot under the Ryotwary and the Bombay ryot under the composite system. Then he concludes as follows :

"But it is on India as a whole that attention must be fixed ; and how sad the condition of the cultivator is in Bengal, with a population of 40 millions, how far worse it is in Madras with its 22 millions and how bad it is in Bombay with its 10 millions, the evidence thus briefly produced... will give some general idea of. It is not merely cultivation that is depressed ; it is society itself that is being gradually destroyed. The race of native gentry has already almost everywhere disappeared ; and a new danger has arisen—that in another generation or two, the cultivators will not be worth having as subjects. For moral debasement is the inevitable consequence of physical depression.. This prospect may be deemed 'satisfactory' by the persons responsible for it. But to India it is ruin and destruction ; to England it is danger and disgrace."

"V. LAW AND JUSTICE."

"The state of the Law, the forms of legal procedure, and the Administration of justice—these form another test by which to try the legislation of 1833. And these, in the case of that Act, are a special and peculiar test. For law Reform was not only declared to be one of its most prominent objects, but it contained large and costly provisions to advance that priceless object.

* * *

Then, as to the actual state and administration of civil law. In the Regulation Provinces there is nothing worthy of name of law ; but to a system unworthy that sacred name, are appended cumbrous legal forms and legal tax. To enter into the courts of what is called justice, it is not only necessary that you should have a plaint, but money to pay (not lawyers but) the Government. So that to all the Company's subjects who cannot commence the search of justice by paying a tax to the Government, the doors of the courts are closed ; for them there is neither law nor justice. And having money, what, when admitted, do they find ? Judges, as Mr. Campbell confesses, a scandal to the British name.

* * *

"For fifteen years has the criminal law, as administered by the Company's courts, been condemned by Government itself. It is just as fit for the Christian people of this realm as for the Hindu subjects of the Queen in India..."

"VI. POLICE.

"If there be little or no criminal law, there is, however, a Police. But it has, we quote the declaration of 1252 British and other Christian Inhabitants of Calcutta and Lower Bengal in their Petition to the House of Commons, 'not only failed to effect the prevention of crimes, the apprehension of offenders, and the protection of life and property ; but it has become the engine of oppression and a great cause of the corruption of the people.'......

"......Tried then by the tests of law, justice, and crime, the legislation of 1833 has not resulted in the improvement and happiness of the natives of India."

"VII. EDUCATION.

"Measure the system of 1833 by the wand of Education, short as we may choose to make it, and the result is worse still. So paltry an item of expenditure is Native Education that it does not even constitute an item in the yearly Finance Accounts laid before Parliament. It is, therefore, impossible to say what percentage of a net revenue of twenty-one millions sterling, is spent on

this means of promoting the improvement and happiness of the Natives. But this is well known, that, whereas in Hindoo times every village community had its school, our destruction of village societies or municipalities has deprived the Natives of their schools, such as they were, and has substituted nothing in their stead......In short, out of these 22 millions of people the Indian Government yearly educates 160 ! And when in Bengal the richer natives do send their sons to England for education, the young men, returning competent for, are refused Government employment on the same terms and on the same rank as Europeans. Within the last five years a Hindoo young gentleman carried off several medical prizes at University College, and received the Diploma of M. D. The Court of Directors, and individual Directors were applied to by some of the most eminent of the retired public servants of India to give Dr. Chuckerbutty a commission as Surgeon in a Native Regiment, but the request was refused. And by gentlemen, too, who, it stands in evidence, have at home spent out of Indian taxation during the last twenty years the enormous sum of £53,000 in public banquets and more select house dinners. It is not by such educational expenditure, or by such treatment when native gentlemen do educate themselves, that 'the improvement and happiness of the natives of India' can be promoted.

"VIII, PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OF THE NATIVES.

"And the insufficiency of this Test of Education naturally brings us to another, *viz.*, the employment of Natives. In our earlier Indian career, Natives were employed in the most important and confidential posts of our government. Our regiments were officered by Natives ; in many places we had Native agents and representatives ; everywhere we were then obliged to make use of native talent. But in those days Indian salaries were at least moderate. But gradually this use of native ability was displaced, and every post of profit, of trust, of value, transferred, at enormous addition to the cost of government—to Englishmen, until at last it became part and parcel of our established policy. The legislation of 1833, however, attempted to remedy this monstrous injustice, by enacting that none should be excluded from any office by reason of religion, place of birth, descent, or colour. But so far from the enactment having remedied the wrong, 'this provision' was, according to Mr. Campbell, 'a mere flourish of trumpets and of no practical effect whatever as far as the natives are concerned.' Indeed, according to him, it has been prejudicial rather than advantageous to native employment ; 'for,' he adds, 'the only effect has been to open to Europeans offices originally intended for natives.'

"The division between the Covenanted and Uncovenanted Services is still kept up ; though the covenant itself is absurd and ridiculous, now that the East India Company has nothing to do with trade. And the purpose for which it is maintained is to draw an artificial line by means of which the Natives may continue, however educated, able, and competent, to be excluded from all high and lucrative employment. The Act of 1833 declares that religion, birth, and colour shall not exclude any man from any office. But the Government of India refuses to allow any native, Hindoo, Mahomedan, or Parsee, admission into its covenanted service. Thus it defeats, by a rule of its own, the provision of the legislature of 1833, which particularly aimed at promoting 'the improvement and happiness' of the natives of India, by employing them in the public service ; and by their employment reducing the cost of Government. Some few thousands—3,000 or 4,000 out of 150 millions—do indeed get small posts, worth on an average some £30 a year. But any real share in Government administration, trust, and responsibility, is denied the people of India. Yet, in Lord Grey's work on the *Colonial Administration of Lord John Russell's Government,* he is found boasting, how on, the Gold Coast of Africa, the Governor summoned its Chiefs into council ; and how, out of this rude Negro Parliament England is there creating an African nation.

"But in India, a people 'learned in all the arts of polished life, when we were yet in the woods," less favoured than the Fantees of Cape Coast Castle, are proscribed as a race of incompetent, helpless incapables, and condemned to everlasting inferiority in lands which their forefathers made famous.

"IX. POPULAR CONTENTMENT

"Are then the people of India content with the working of the legislation of 1833 ? It would be strange if they were ; and they are not. They do not rebel ; they do not resist ; they do not rise against the Indian Government ; . . . . ; for, under the British rule the power of the Government is too strong and well organised for a successful resort to these violent modes of manifesting public opinion. But now that the opportunity has arisen—now that there is a chance of improvement, they petition Parliament. And what say their petitions ? That they are happy and prosperous ? That they are satisfied with the results of the Act of 1833 ? That they regard its renewal with contentment and hope ? Nothing of the sort. The very reverse,...

"The people of Madras complain that the whole framework of society has been overthrown, to their injury, and almost to their ruin.

* * * *

"They complain that salt, the only condiment for their tasteless rice, and without which neither they nor their cattle can live, is a Government monopoly .

"They complain that not only are they taxed for their shops in towns, and for stalls and sheds on road sides ; but for each tool and implement, of the trades ; nay, for their very knives, *'the cost of which,'* they tell Parliament, *'is frequently exceeded six times over by the Moturpha [Tax] under which the use of them is permitted.'*

"They complain, that in order to raise revenue from ardent spirits, the Government is forcing drunkenness on them ; 'a vice,' they add, 'forbidden by Hindu and Mohammedan law.'

* * *

"If contentment, therefore, be a test of good government, the Act of 1833 has signally failed."

X. "HOME CONTROL

"Another test yet remains. The Act of 1833 was proposed as a substitute for a constitution. If we cannot, it was then argued by Mr. Macaulay, on behalf of Lord Grey's Government, safely entrust the people of India with popular rights and privileges, we will at least have a constituency at home bound by their own interests to watch over and protect them ; a constituency which, to use his exact words, *'shall feel any disorder in the finances of India in the disorder of their own household affairs;* Has this anticipation been realized—has this intention been fulfilled ? No ; disorders there have been for fifteen years in the finances of India : but those disorders have not been felt in the 'household affairs' of the proprietors of East India stock. Despite Indian deficits, English dividends of ten and a half per cent, have been regularly maintained and 'well and truly paid'. And thus India has lost that English security for good government which Mr. Macaulay announced it was a design of the Act of 1833 to establish.

"But it is unnecessary, . . ., to pursue the enquiry further. Enough has been sketched, . . .to make rational, benevolent, and patriotic men hesitate when asked to consent to a renewal of the Act of 1833 ; enough has been stated to make them doubt whether the present system of Government is even capable of improvement ; enough, we believe, to convince all impartial men that a new plan of Indian administration must be cast."

It was after passing the Act of 1833, that the Company deliberately took the step which had for its object the annexation of all the native states of India by any means—fair or foul—within their power.

CHAPTER LXIX

MACAULAY IN INDIA

Macaulay was a needy adventurer who came out to this country to shake the pagoda tree and grow rich at the expense of the children of the soil, some of whom he had not the scruple to abuse to his heart's content. In a letter to his sister, who shared his "exile" to India, Macaulay wrote on 17th August, 1833 :

"At present the plain fact is that I can continue to be a public man only while I can continue in office. If I left my place in the Government, I must leave my seat in Parliament too. For I must live; I can live only by my pen and it is absolutely impossible for any man to write enough to procure him a decent subsistence, and at the same time to take an active part in politics. . . . I have never made more than two hundred a year by my pen. I could not support myself in comfort on less than five hundred, and I shall in all probability have many others to support. The prospects of our famly are, if possible, darker than ever."

So he thought of coming out to India to make his fortune. The post of the Law Member was

"of the highest dignity and consideration. The salary is ten thousand pounds a year. I am assured by persons who know Calcutta intimately and have themselves mixed in the highest circles and held the highest offices at that Presidency, that I may live in splendour there for five thousands a year, and may save the rest of the salary with the accruing interest. I may therefore hope to return to England, at only thirty-nine, in the full vigour of life, with a fortune of thirty thousand pounds. A larger fortune I never desired."

It should be noted that he also received £5000 a year as Law Commissioner. This vast sum was paid to him for nothing.

The appointment of Macaulay to the post of Law Member was of the nature of a jobbery. H. H. Wilson writes :

"The power of legislating for all persons and for all courts of justice was advantageously vested in the supreme Government; but it might be doubted whether the association of the Chief Justice as a legal member of the council would not have more effectively and economically answered the purpose, than the special appointment of *an individual from England unfamiliar with the law or the practice of the Indian courts and recommended by no remarkable forensic qualifications.*"*

Macaulay largely contributed, both directly, and indirectly, to the genesis of the present unrest in this country. He entertained supreme contempt for everything Indian. His Minute on education was written in such a manner as to outrage the feelings of the people of India. He who was not acquainted with any of the languages of this vast peninsula—nor cared to know anything of the literature of ancient India,—had yet the audacity to pronounce his contemptuous judgment on them !

Before Macaulay had come to India, a controversy had been going on among important personages, about the best method of imparting education to the natives of

* Mill and Wilson's *History of British India,* Vol. IX., p. 394. The italics are ours

India. Two parties had been formed, called *the orientalists and the occidentalists.* The orientalists included such distinguished men as Horace Hayman Wilson and the Prinsep brothers. The best known man at that time amongst the occidentalists was the Revd. Dr. Duff. The orientalists were for giving an education to the people of this country exclusively in the oriental languages—both classical and modern. The occidentalists, on the other hand, ignored more or less the claims of the oriental languages, and wished that English should be made the medium of instruction. As far back as 1826, the great Raja Ram Mohun Roy had addressed a letter on the subject to Lord Amherst, the then Governor-General of India.* That great Hindu Reformer was an occidentalist, but not of the type of Macaulay. He was a patriot. *He favoured the idea that English should be taught as a second language,* but should not be made the medium of instruction.

After his arrival in India, Macaulay also took part in the controversy. He presided over the deliberations of the two parties. The orientalists and occidentalists were equally divided, and the casting vote of Macaulay as President defeated the orientalists.

There can be no doubt that by making English the medium of instruction he wanted to benefit his own country, and at the same time to denationalise the people of India. He wrote to his father in 1836 :

"It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal, thirty years hence."†

Macaulay's object was to undermine the social and religious institutions of India. This is now recognised by the better class of English journalists. *The Indian Daily News*, for instance, wrote in its leader on March 29, 1909, that—

"Lord Macaulay's triumph over the Oriental School, headed by Dr. Wilson, was really the triumph of a deliberate intention to undermine the religious and social life of India."

Thus it would appear, that in all that he did in and for India Macaulay was not swayed by any consideration or motive of philanthropy or altruism, but by selfishness—if not quite sordid, at the best enlightened.

The post of the Law Member was created and the natives of this countiy were saddled with the heavy burden of his pay and allowances, because he was expected to make such laws and regulations as would ensure peace and prosperity in India. In their letter, dated 10th December, 1834, the Court of Directors wrote to the Government of India:

"His (that is, the Law Member's) will naturally be the principal share, not only in the task of giving shape and connection to the several laws as they pass, but also in the mighty labour of collecting all that local information and calling into view all those general considerations, which belong to each occasion, and of thus enabling the council to embody the abstract and essential principles of good government in regulations adapted to the peculiar habits, character, and institutions of the vast and infinitely diversified people under their sway."

Judged by the above standard, it must be unhesitatingly pronounced that one and

* See my *History of Education in India under the rule of the East India Company.* Also Part I, Selections from the Educational Records of the Government of India, by Sir H. Sharp.

† See my *History of Education in India under the Company*, pp. 80 and 105.

all the Law Members from the time of Macaulay downwards were not fitted for the office to which they were appointed and that they neglected, however unintentionlly, the duties appertaining to the post.

Had the Court of Directors been sincere in their professions, they should have appointed an Indian and not a Britisher to the then newly created post of Law Member, for none but an Indian can be thoroughly acquainted with the peculiar habits, character, and institutions of the vast and infinitely diversified people of India.

Lord Bentinck's minute, dated 31st July, 1834, shows the difficulties of the situation in which the Law Member was placed:

"It is to this particular point, the exclusion of the fourth member from the ordinary sitting of the council, to which I wish particularly to advert, as detracting very much from his usefulness, if not incapacitating him from the very important duties confided to him by the Legislature. Mr. Macaulay has never been in India; and he and his successors, like the greater part of the past and probably of future Governors and Governor-Generals..... as a stranger to the country for which he is to play the principal part, in making laws and regulations, he certainly may give most useful advice to the council.... Where is he to gain his practical knowledge of the state of societies; of its manners, its feelings and its customs? How is he to discover what there is to remedy, to reform, or to preserve? How is he to discover the abuses or the imperfections of our administration in any of its branches, revenue, judicial, or police? How is he to become acquainted with the effect of the existing laws and institutions upon the immense population? He must learn all this somewhere, or he will be a poor legislator. From the people themselves, the main objects of his care, he will learn nothing. They are not consulted, and hitherto they have had no means of making themselves heard. With them he can have little intercourse, and to the greater part of the European residents, any correct information upon all these details is as inaccessible as to himself. He can only learn his lessons in the same way that all Governors, who have been strangers, have done before him, by following, day by day, the reports of all the functionaries of the Empire..... *The proceedings of the Government contain the only real record of present life, and of the actually passing condition of India, although I must admit that these must remain but a very imperfect index either to the feelings of the people, or to the effect of our laws and regulations, until the natives themselves can be more mixed in their own government and become responsible advisers and partners in the administration."*

One of the duties of the Law Member was to make laws for the natives of India. This was the effect of the Charter Act of 1833. It has been shown in the last chapter that the laws made did not make for the peace and prosperity of India, and the happiness and enlightenment of its people.

Macaulay drew up the Indian Penal Code. British rule in India had in many respects its prototype in British rule in Ireland. Burke described the Irish Penal Code as

"well-digested and well-disposed in all its parts; a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance, and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man."

The above is more or less applicable to the Indian Penal Code also. The judicial system which British rule introduced in India was the best calculated to give insecurity to life and property and to encourage corruption and litigation. The Marquis of Hastings observed in a despatch from the Directors to the Bengal Government, dated February, 1819.

"The present state of landed property in Bengal may be brought under review as connected with the judicial administration, since it appears to have originated more from the practical operations of legal decisions than from the fiscal regulations of this Government. The powers which have been assumed by the auction purchasers have completely destroyed every shadow of a right in the tenants, and reduced a happy and comparatively rich peasantry to the lowest stage of penury and indigence. We seem to have accomplished a revolution in the state of society, which has, by some unexpected fatality, proved detrimental to general morals, and by no means conducive to the convenience of our Government; since the first establishment of the zillah Courts in 1780, and from the regular organisation of them in 1793, a new progeny has grown up under our hands; the principal features which show themselves in a generation so formed, beneath the shade of our regulations, are the spirit of litigation, which our judicial establishment cannot meet, and a morality certainly much deteriorated. If in the system or the practical execution of it, we should be found to have relaxed many ties of moral or religious restraint on the conduct of individuals, to have destroyed the influence of former institutions, without substituting any check in their place, to have given loose to the most forward passions of human nature and dissolved the wholesome control of public opinion and private censure, we shall be bound to acknowledge that our regulations have been productive of a state of things which imperiously calls upon us to provide an immediate remedy for so serious a mischief."

The Charter Act of 1833 tried to provide a remedy by the appointment of Macaulay as Law Member of the Supreme Council of the Government of India. Regarding Macaulay's Penal Code, Mr. W. Theobald, a Calcutta Barrister, told the Select Parliamentary Committee on Colonisation and Settlement (India) on the 2nd April, 1858 :

"The principle of English law is that every person who exercises a power or an authority given by law, must exercise that power or authority according to law, and that is a universal principle ; and then whether a breach of the law is to involve penalties or simply damages depends, I apprehend, by the principles of English law, merely on the character of the injury. If it is a general injury, or public injury or injury of a serious character, then a breach of the law comes under our penal law ; if it is a mere private matter which admits of compensation by damages, then it belongs to the civil law. Now here are the two provisions of Mr. Macaulay's Code:

'Nothing is an offence which is done by a person who is or in good faith believes himself to be commanded by law to do it.'

"Now that establishes an irresponsibility for what is done contrary to law; on what ground ? Simply that the person who violates the law, in good faith believes he is acting according to law. *It is monstrous* ; I think, it does not require any comment.

"The popularity of this code in England rests, I believe, mainly on the authority and high name of Mr. Macaulay ;...The second proposition in Mr. Macaulay's Code is, 'Nothing is an offence which is done by a person, in the exercise, to the best of his judgment exerted in good faith, of any power given to him by law.'

"I confess I do not quite see in what is the operation of that distinct from the former exception, but it is a principle unknown to and utterly at variance with English law, it establishes an irresponsibility upon the part of all persons having powers of any kind by law, and places them in a state of irresponsibility, notwithstanding a breach of the law ; and that merely on the ground of supposing that they were doing right and that there was no malice towards the persons whom they have injured. That is a monstrous principle...There is, for instance, the right of private defence. I apprehend the law of England on the right of private defence is a most satisfactory law...The Penal Code is very different."

Of course, the witness was a native of England, and he objected to those sections of the Code which affected the interests of his compatriots in this "land of regrets."

Had he been an Indian, he would have condemned the Code in no measured terms. The Code was calculated to degrade the natives of India, though it is difficult to find out to what extent, if any, it was deliberately intended to do so. Every definition of an offence in it is so comprehensive, that many an innocent act might be construed by it into an offence. On the other hand, there are provisions in the Code, especially in the General Exceptions, which may provide as excellent loopholes for the escape of the really guilty, should occasions arise for it.

Then turning to the question of punishment: How severe are the punishments laid down in the Code for all sorts of offences, is a well-known fact. In no other civilised country under the sun, are offenders so severely punished as they are in India. The principle underlying the law is—once a jail-bird, always a jail-bird. There is an attempt to outcast the criminal from society, no idea of reclaiming him as a citizen. The Code is like an iron machine whose business is to forge fetters for the Indian. It depresses him in spirit and has made him less than a man.

Macaulay looked upon India much in the same way as a landlord looks upon his serfs. He wrote:

"We know that India cannot have a free government. But she may have the next best thing—a firm and impartial despotism."

He had no heart, no sympathy for the longings and ambitions of educated India, nor had he ever tried to understand them. His idea was to bind India with the fetters of legislation, albeit the chain might be gilded. In his famous speech of the 10th of July, 1833, Macaulay said:

"I believe that no country ever stood so much in need of a code of laws as India; and I believe also that there never was a country in which the want might so easily be supplied.......It is a work which especially belongs to a Government like that of India, to an enlightened and paternal despotism."

Digby observes in his *Prosperous British India*, p. 26:

"The climax is reached by Thomas Babington Macaulay, then member for Leeds, who was in himself as Law Member in India, as member of Parliament afterwards—to show that much of what he said was of the tongue merely and not of the heart."

John Bright, in his speech delivered in the House of Commons, on 3rd June, 1853, said:

"I was not in the House when the Right Hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Macaulay) brought forward the Bill of 1833, but I understand it was stated that the Law Commission was to do wonders: yet now we have the evidence of the Right Hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Control that the Report of the Law Commission has ever since been going backwards and forwards, like an unsettled spirit; between this country and India. Mr. Cameron in his evidence said...that the Court of Directors actually sneered at the propositions of their officers for enactments of any kind, and that it was evidently their object to gradually extinguish the Commission altogether. Yet the evidence of Mr. Cameron went to show the extraordinary complication and confusion of the law and law administration over all the British dominions in India."

For nearly twenty years, the various natives of Great Britain who filled the office of the Law Commissioner or Member of the Council of India did absolutely no work, but

they drew during that period the aggregate amount of Rs.35,68,805 from the Indian revenues.

If the proverb of the mountain in labour bringing forth a mouse is applicable to anything in this world, it is to the labour of the Law Commission. The mouse which was after all brought forth was the Indian Penal Code. Of late years, the genus to which the mouse belongs has been credited, rightly or wrongly, with the transmission and propagation of the plague. The Indian Penal Code has proved the propagator and transmitter of a sort of moral plague in India. Steps should be taken to destroy this sort of plague, as they have been to destroy rats.

CHAPTER LXX

SIR CHARLES METCALFE'S ADMINISTRATION (1835-1836)

From the retirement of Lord William Bentinck from India in March, 1835, till March 1836, Metcalfe acted as Governor-General of India.

It is not presuming too much to say that he would have followed in the footsteps of Wellesley, had he an opportunity to do so. One of his papers—the very first printed by Kaye in his "Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe"—is a special pleading for the policy pursued by his patron and condemnation of that of Barlow. Extracts from this paper are given below :

> "Lord Wellesley's desire was to unite the tranquillity of all the powers of India with our own. How fair, how beautiful, how virtuous, does this system seem; how tenfold fair, beautiful, and virtuous when compared with the other ugly nasty, abominable one....
>
> "There is a loud cry that we are in danger from extended dominion. For my part I can contemplate universal dominion in India without much fear."

But he was never confirmed in the appointment of Governor-General of India. The authorities of the East India Company, it is alleged, were displeased with him, for his liberating the Indian press. Kaye says:

> "The intelligence of what he had done reached them whilst the question of the Governor-Generalship was still an open one. It may have in some measure influenced the decision."*

He was no friend of the natives of India, as is evident from his recorded opinions, extracts from which have already been given before. So his appointment as *pucca* Governor-General of India would not have advanced the interest or happiness of Indians.

* *Lives of Indian Officers).* Vol. I, p. 490.

CHAPTER LXXI

LORD AUCKLAND'S ADMINISTRATION (1836—1841)

When the Peel ministry was formed in 1835, their choice fell on Mountstuart Elphinstone as a fit successor to Bentinck. In the Elphinstone memorial meeting held on February 16, 1860, at Willis's Rooms, King Street, St. James's, London, Lord Ellenborough said:

"With the entire concurrence of the late Duke of Wellington, on the formation of Sir Robert Peel's ministry in 1835, he (Lord Ellenborough), had offered to Mr. Elphinstone the high office of Governor-General of India, but the state of his health prevented him from accepting that distinguished position. He had more than once thought, how different might possibly have been at that moment our position in India had he been enabled to hold the situation then offered to him."

Elphinstone has recorded in his journals, the real reason why he declined the offer of the Governor-Generalship of India. This has been already quoted in a previous page.

After Elphinstone's refusal, Peel's Government appointed Lord Heytesbury as Bentinck's successor. But with the change of the ministry, his appointment was cancelled. In *East and West* for August, 1905 (pp. 795—808), a journal at that time conducted by the well-known publicist, Mr. B. M. Malabari of Bombay, Dr. R. Garnett commenced an article on "a forgotten episode of Indian History," by writing that

"The supersession of Lord Heytesbury, appointed Governor-General of India by Sir Robert Peel's ministry of 1834—35, by the Government which succeeded them in the April of the latter year, attracted much less attention than might have been expected at the time, and has received but little notice from historians."

Dr. Garnett assigns the cause of Lord Heytesbury's supersession to his pro-Russian proclivities. He says:

"In our opinion, the principal cause of Lord Heytesbury's supersession by the Melbourne ministry, and of the opposition's languor in espousing his cause, was the suspicion, under which he lay, of Russian sympathies. Although at that time, Russia was twice as far from our Indian frontiers as now, the apprehensions and suspicions of her designs were in many quarters more acute than they are at present."

But to our mind Lord Heytesbury's sympathies with Russia do not seem to be a sufficient cause for his supersession. We suspect that he did not approve of the policy which had then been in vogue to annex Indian states on every possible occasion. Sir John Cam Hobhouse was so much in favour of this, that he was greatly pleased when the Raja of Satara died, for it afforded an opportunity to the Company to annex that principality (see *Story of Satara*, p. 232). It was perhaps this consideration which led Hobhouse to write to the King to revoke Lord Heytesbury's appointment. In his letter dated May 1st, 1835 to the King, he wrote:

"That it has appeared to your Majesty's cofidential servants that if Lord Heytesbury were to

proceed to India, his appointment would be, if not formally, at least virtually, their act and they would be justly considered responsible for his Lordship's administration of the Indian Government. As they would not venture to incur such responsibilities except for an individual possessed of their entire confidence, (which cannot be said to be the case with respect to Lord Heytesbury), and as they would not wish to press any other appointment upon the Court of Directors, at the present moment, Sir John Hobhouse would respectfully submit to your Majesty the propriety of waiting for the arrival of William Bentinck before taking any final steps towards deciding upon his successor."

Dr. Garnett in concluding his article writes :

"It only remains to add that, as foreshadowed in Hobhouse's letter to the King, the Governor-Generalship was kept open until Lord William Bentinck's arrival in England in September, when Sir J. Auckland was appointed,..."

Thus Bentinck had a voice in settling the appointment of his successor. Metcalfe and he were not friends, for the former differed from the latter in many essential points of Indian administration, and especially the removal of press restrictions, which was not palatable to Bentinck, who, no wonder, did not therefore recommend him to be his successor.*

The nobleman who was appointed to succeed Bentinck as Governor-General of India was the Earl of Auckland, whose family surname was Eden. He came out to India accompanied by his two sisters, one of whom was the Hon'ble Miss Emily Eden, whose journal "Up the Country" has delighted, for its literary charm, generations of natives of England, as testified by the several editions the work has run into.

The diabolical plot which was masqueraded under the scheme of the navigation of the Indus in the regime of Bentinck was now to be unraveled and it was revealed to the world in the shape of the First Afghan War. Auckland's administration is an important landmark in the history of British India, because that which has been called the "scientific frontier" has been since his time the object which the Christian rulers of India have been in search of, and, like the will-'o-the wisp, it is leading them on and on without its being ever discovered. Improvement in the internal administration of the country, as well as the interests and happiness of the millions of the population of India, has been sacrificed for the sake of this never-to-be-determined "scientific frontier." If Sindh, Panjab, Baluchistan, Chitral and a portion of Afganistan have been

* The *Edinburgh Review* (No 272 for January to April, 1871) wrote:

"Sir Robert Peel had, with needless haste, selected one of his own adherents, Lord Heytesbury, to succeed Lord William Bentinck in the Governor-Generalship of India, then about to fall vacant. At the first meeting of the Cabinet Hobhouse brought before his colleagues the question of cancelling this nomination, which they decided to do, and the first communication of the new Indian Minister to the King was to advise His Majesty to revoke an appointment which was already signed on the recommendation of the preceding Government. The King reluctantly consented. The 'Chairs' of the East India Company protested against what was called an 'act of power.' Curiously enough, Mr. Gladstone's present Cabinet was called upon at one of its first meetings to entertain the same question. Lord Mayo had been appointed to the Governor-Generalship by Mr. Disraeli and had actually started for Calcutta before the office was vacant. The appointment might have been revoked. But it was wisely and properly determined to confirm it, and the result of Lord Mayo's administration has amply justified that decision." Pp. 318-319.

made to lose their independence, and the chain of subjugation is pressing heavily round the necks of the inhabitants of those regions, it is on the ostensible ground that, for the imperial interests of England, a "scientific frontier" should be delimited for the Indian Empire.

Afghanistan, which was the scene of action and whose politics was the theme of discussion during the regime of Auckland, was at that time ruled by that astute statesman Dost Muhammad Khan. He had ascended the throne amidst carnage, which used to be the normal state of affairs in that country, not inaptly styled the Switzerland of Asia, whenever any one asserted his claim to its sovereignty. Dost Muhammad being successful, Shah Suja, the late sovereign, had to leave Afghanistan, and as a wanderer on the face of the earth, at last found an asylum at Ludhiana, living as a fugitive on the bounty of the East India Company.

Lieutenant Burnes, who had navigated the Indus and presented Ranjit Singh with the horses and the coach, received the permission of the Governor-General of India to travel into and explore Central Asia. He received his passports at Delhi, from whence he started on the 3rd of January, 1832. For his companions he had Dr. Gerard, who had made his name by his explorations in the Himalaya, Pandit Mohün Lal, a Kashmiri Brahmin, who was one of the first alumni of the Dehli College, and a Mahomedan surveyor named Mahomed Ali. Alexander Burnes safely accomplished his journey—traversed Afghanistan, where he was received with great hospitality by every man of rank and importance and especially by its ruler Dost Muhammad, when he passed through Kabul. After a year's sojourn in Central Asia, he returned in 1833, when he proceeded to England.

In England, he was lionised. He himself wrote in one of his letters to his mother,

"I am killed with honours and kindness and it is a more painful death than starvation among the Usbeks."*

He had an interview with King William the Fourth. He has himself recorded the conversation he had with his Majesty. He writes:

"His Majesty immediately began on my travels, and, desiring me to wheel round a table for him, he pulled his chair and sat down by mine. Hereon I pulled out a map, ... I began, and got along most fluently. I told him of the difficulties in Sindh, the reception by Runjeet, &c., but William the Fourth was all for politics, so I talked of the designs of Russia, her treaties, intrigues, agencies, ambassadors, commerce, &c., the facilities, the obstacles regarding the advance of armies..."*

The King then got up, (and said):

"I trust in God that your life may be spared, that our Eastern Empire may benefit by the talents and abilities which you possess. You are entrusted with fearful information: you must take care what you publish. My ministers have been speaking of you to me, in particular Lord Grey. You will tell his Lordship and Mr. Grant all the conversation you have had with me, and you will tell them what I think upon the ambition of Russia...... .....Lord Grey thinks, as I do, that you have come home on a mission of primary importance——second only to the politics of Russia and Constantinople.......Lord Grey tells me that you have convinced him that our position in Russia is hopeless." (*Ibid.*, p. 27).

Kaye's *Lives of Indian Officers*, Vol. II, p. 26.

Here then was the genesis of the First Afghan War. The authorities wanted to interfere in the politics of Afghanistan on the ostensible pretext of Russia's advance towards India. Burnes returned to India and a few months' after his return, arrived Lord Auckland as Governor-General of India. Kaye writes that Auckland

"had met Burnes at Bowood, had been pleased with his conversation, and had formed a high opinion of the energy and ability of the young subaltern. When, therefore, the first rude scheme of a pacific policy in the countries beyond the Indus took shape in his mind, he recognised at once the fact that Burnes must be one of its chief agents. So the Cutch assistant [Burnes] was placed under the orders of the Supreme Government, and directed to hold himself in readiness to undertake what was described at the time, and is still known in history, as a 'commercial mission' to Caubul. Commerce, in the vocabulary of the East, is only another name for conquest.......and this commercial mission became the cloak of grave political designs."*

So Burnes proceeded at the close of the year 1836 to Kabul at the head of the "commercial mission." Kaye does not hold Auckland so much responsible for this mission as his predecessor. He writes :

"Lord Auckland, it should be stated, received this as a legacy from Lord William Bentinck, with whom Burnes had been in communication in India, and in correspondence during his residence in England. Whilst at home, Burnes had ceaselessly impressed on the King's ministers as well as on the Directors of the Company, the importance of not neglecting, either in their commercial or their political aspects, the countries beyond the Indus : . . . . . . In one letter to Lord William Bentinck, he wrote that Lord Grey took a too European view of the question, and considered it chiefly 'in connexion with the designs of Russia towards Constantinople' ; whilst Lord Lansdowne, having 'a mind cast in so noble a mould, looked with more interest on the great future of human society than on our immediate relations with those countries'." Foot-note to page 34 of Vol. II of *Lives of Indian Officers.* (Edition of 1867).

Bentinck was restrained from declaring war on any state (except that of Kurg) because of the financial embarrassments in which the Company had been placed by the Burmese War. But he was no lover of peace, or friend of the non-Christian and coloured races of Asia. His councillors also took their cue from him, and so when the authorities from the King downwards in England were brought to book by Burnes on the Central Asian question from the same standpoint as himself, they found no difficulty to induce Auckland to do what suited their views best. Writes Kaye :

"Lord Auckland was not an ambitious man—quiet, sensible, inclined towards peace, he would not have given himself up to the allurements of a greater game if he had not been stimulated, past all hope of resistance, by evil advisers, who were continually pouring into his ears alarming stories of deep-laid plots and subtle intrigues emanating from the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, and of the wide-spread corruption that was to be wrought by the Russian gold."†

The object of the "commercial mission" was to induce Dost Muhammad to throw in his lot with the English against Russia. The Mission entered Kabul on the 20th of September, 1837, and was, by orders of the Afghan sovereign, received with great pomp and splendour. But the object of the mission was not achieved. The English wanted to gain every possible advantage from the alliance with the Afghan ruler but not to concede to him anything in return. Dost Muhammad had been shorn of some of his

* *Ibid.*, p. 33.

† *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Mohun Lal

Revd. C. F. Swartz

General, the Earl of Moira

most valuable eastern districts, especially the fertile valley of Peshawar, by Ranjit Singh. He asked the English as one of the conditions of the alliance that they would exert their best offices to have all those districts of which he had been dispossessed by the Sikh ruler to be restored to him. In this he was not asking too much. He saw before his eyes how the English had prevented Ranjit Singh from acquiring Sindh. The same considerations applied to his case also. But it was not the interest of the Christian Government of India to help the Afghan ruler in his demand. The Sindhian was a pusillanimous creature compared to the Afghan and the Sindh Government was not so strong as that of Kabul. It was very easy for the English to acquire Sindh at any time that suited their convenience. But it was not so with Afghanistan. A century had not yet rolled its course since the Afghan Kingdom had extended as far as the banks of the Jumna. Sindh Amirs as well as the Sikh Chiefs were the vassals of Afghanistan. Marquess Wellesley was always afraid of an invasion from that quarter. To weaken Afghanistan was the policy of that Governor-General. To achieve this end, he intrigued with the rulers of Persia, Sindh and the Panjab.

Although at the time of which we are speaking Afghanistan was not so strong as it had been during Marquess Wellesley's regime, yet it was not to be trifled with, or treated with contempt. So it was not the interest of the English to make Afghanistan a strong power. Moreover, they knew that on the death of Ranjit Singh, the Panjab would come into their hands and so eventually also the districts of Afghanistan which that Sikh sovereign had acquired from Dost Muhammad.

Under these circumstances it was not the policy then of the Christian Government of India to accede to the request of Dost Muhammad. They were intriguing and conspiring even to subvert Dost Muhammad's dynasty, because that Afghan was a capable sovereign and hence as a tall poppy he was an eyesore to them and deserved to be cut down. So it was not their interest to make the commercial mission a success.

To achieve their end, they had a tool ready at hand whom they wanted to make use of as a puppet. The ex-King Shah Suja was a pensioner of the Company. They wanted to depose and dispose of Dost Muhammad and reinstall Shah Suja on the throne of Kabul. So while Burnes was trying his best to promote the British alliance with the Amir (writes Kaye) :

"Other counsels were prevailing at Simla—that great hot-bed of intrigue on the Himalayan hills—." * They conceived the idea of re-instating the old deposed dynasty of Shah Soojah, and they picked him out of the dust of Loodhianah to make him a tool and a puppet, . . ."

Sir Henry Fane was at that time, the Commander-in-Chief in India. He did not approve of the policy of interference in the affairs of Afghanistan. In 1837, he wrote to Sir Charles Metcalfe :

"Every advance you might make beyond the Sutlej to the Westward, in my opinion, adds to your military weakness......If you want your empire to expand, expand it over Oude or over Gwalior, and the remains of the Mahratta empire. Make yourselves complete sovereigns of all within your bounds. *But let alone the far West.*

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* *Ibid.*, p. 36.

(Kaye's Life of Lord Metcalfe, Vol. II, p. 306, quoted in Kaye's *War in Afghanistan*, 4th Edition, 1890, pp 359-360 f. n.)

But without a war Shah Suja could not be re-instated. So the Christian jingoes of Simla determined to go to war with Dost Muhammad.

This First Afghan War derives its importance, not so much from the numbers of battles fought, or the success attending one or the other contending party, as from the curious sidelight it throws on the national character of the English of those days and on the tortuous course of their diplomacy—certainly not of oriental diplomacy. In the first place, those who ever pinned or even now pin their faith on the genuineness of the Parliamentary books—whether blue or white—were undeceived by the manner in which those books are manufactured. The so-called honourable members of Parliament, whether nobles or commoners, did not consider it inconsistent with their fine sense of honour and honesty, to garble documents and deliberately misrepresent facts and publish lies to the world. The garbled version of the Burnes correspondence published in the parliamentary papers relating to the First Afghan War very clearly establishes what we have said above. In those papers Burnes was made to appear as favoring the war with Afghanistan. The deliberate lies contained in these papers would never have been known but for their exposure made by the father of Burnes. Great was the sensation caused in England by the exposure, which may be judged from the publications of those days.

As said above, in the parliamentary papers Burnes was made to appear as favoring the war, because Dost Muhammad was not friendly to the English. The reverse of this was the real fact. The passage reproduced below was deliberately suppressed and not published in the official correspondence. On the 30th December, 1837, Burnes wrote from Kabul to Mr. Macnaghten:

"The present position of the British Government at this capital appears to me a most gratifying proof of the estimation in which it is held by the Afghan nation. Russia has come forward with offers which are certainly substantial. Persia has been lavish in her promises, and Bokhara and other states have not been backward. Yet,in all that has passed or is daily transpiring, the *Chief of Caubul declares that he prefers the sympathy and friendly offices of the British to all these offers, however alluring they may seem, from Persia or from the Emperor*—which certainly places his good sense in a light more than prominent, and, in my humble judgment, proves that, by an earlier attention to these countries we might have escaped the whole of these intrigues, and held long since a stable influence in Caubul."

Similarly other passages which placed Dost Muhammad's conduct in a favorable light were deliberately omitted from the published correspondence. Thus when the Russian officer Captain Vickovich was alleged to have brought letters from the Czar to Dost Mahammad, seeking an alliance with him, the latter went to Burnes for counsel and guidance. Burnes reported the incident to the Supreme Government of India. But the passages in the correspondence which were favorable to Dost Muhammad were not printed.

Regarding the garbled manner in which the parliamentary papers regarding the first Afghan War were issued, Kaye writes with just indignation:

" I cannot, indeed, suppress the utterance of my abhorrence of this system of garbling the official

correspondence of public men—sending the letter of a statesman or diplomatist into the world mutilated, emasculated—the very pith and substance of them cut out by the unsparing hand of the state-anatomist. The dishonesty by which lie upon lie is palmed upon the world has not one redeeming feature. If public men are, without reprehension, to be permitted to lie in the face of nations—wilfully, elaborately, and maliciously to bear false witness against their neighbours, what hope is there for private veracity? In the case before us the *suppressio veri* is virtually the *assertio falsi*. The character of Dost Mahomed has been lied away; the character of Burnes has been lied away; both, by the mutilation of the correspondence of the latter, have been fearfully misrepresented —both have been set forth as doing what they did not, and omitting to do what they did. I care not, whose knife—whose hand did the work of mutilation. And, indeed, I do not know. I deal with principles, not with persons; and have no party ends to serve. The cause of truth must be upheld. Official documents are the sheet anchors of historians—the last courts of appeal to which the public resort. If these documents are tampered with, if they are made to misrepresent the words and actions of public men, the grave of truth is dug, and there is seldom a resurrection. It is not always that an afflicted parent is ready to step forward on behalf of an injured child, and to lay a memorial at the feet of his sovereign, exposing the cruelty by which an honourable man has been represented in state documents as doing that which was abhorrent to his nature. In most cases the lie goes down unassailed and often unsuspected, to posterity, and in place of sober history, we have a florid romance."

The "commercial mission" was a failure. "Burnes asked for every thing; but promised nothing. He had no power to make any concessions." So Burnes, with the commercial mission, left Kabul on the 26th of April, 1838 and in a few days' time arrived at Simla.

The Russian agent was biding his time and after the departure of the English "commercial mission," his influence was paramount in the court of the Afghan ruler. Kaye says:

"Burnes went; and Vickovich, who had risen greatly in favour, soon took his departure for Herat, promising everything that Dost Mahomed wanted—engaging to furnish money to the Barukzye chiefs, and undertaking to propitiate Runjeet Singh."

The fiat had gone forth at Simla that war should be declared against Afghanistan, Dost Muhammad be deposed and Shah Suja be re-installed on the throne of Kabul.*

* Mr. Keene, in an appendix to his history of India, gives the genesis of the first Afghan War. He says that :

"By the courtesy of the India Office in allowing access to the despatches of the period—never before published, or only in an imperfect form—the whole facts of the case are now, for the first time, forthcoming.

In concluding the Appendix, he writes :

"From the papers it can only be concluded that the mind of Lord Auckland had been gradually influenced, until he became impressed with the necessity of substituting the Saduzai dynasty—the 'Duranic Empire' as it was called—for the Amirate of the Dost, led thereto by fear of Persia and Russia. But it appears almost equally certain that the British Ministry made that policy their own : not merely by adoption but by prior suggestion and subsequent encouragement, so that they would even have enjoined it on the Governor-General, if he had not originated it himself. Without seeing private correspondence, long since beyond reach, no more can be known; but Palmerston did much of his work, it is understood, by that channel, in India known as 'semi-official'.

"Captain Burnes did not cease to press on the attention of Government the danger from Persia and Russia; and his desire for action was admirably seconded by letters he received from England.

So when Burnes reached Simla the conspirators in the summer capital of India prevailed upon him

"not to spoil the 'great game' by dissuading Lord Auckland from the aggressive policy to which he had reluctantly given his consent."*

Burnes was not a strong-minded man. He yielded to the persuasive eloquence of that arch-conspirator, Macnaghten, a model Christian to boot, and a distinguished linguist, and J. R. Colvin, whose voice was paramount in the council of ths Supreme Government.

The then Commander-in-Chief, named Sir Henry Fane, was not in favour of the invasion of Afghanistan. He very truly observed, "Every advance you might make beyond the Sutlej to the Westward adds to your military weakness."

But his advice, not being palatable to his colleagues, was not paid any attention to.

The war being decided upon, a proclamation was issued which was a tissue of falsehoods of the most audacious kind conceivable.

But before the issue of this proclamation a Treaty, what is known as the Tri-partite, was concluded between the East India Company on the one hand and Ranjit Singh and Shah Suja on the other. This Treaty is the most nefarious transaction that ever disgraced the diplomatic annals of any nation or country. By it the existence of the state of Sindh was doomed. Ranjit Singh was an unwilling party to this treaty, but perhaps he calculated upon securing some advantages for his principality from this diplomatic blunder on the part of the Anglo-Indian government of India.

From the military and strategical viewpoint also, this expedition to Afghanistan was a blunder. As a military genius, Ranjit Singh must have seen through it. He had a series of grievances against the British Government of India. He had been prevented from extending his influence over the country situated between the Sutlej and Jumna and more recently he saw how the Company's Government brought Sindh under their sphere of influence, forbidding him, as it were, to move in that quarter. All these things were rankling in his breast and he thought here was an opportunity for him to pay the British Government of India in their own coins and with simple and compound interest

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I have a note in which is written. 'I send you a letter to read from the chairman of the Directors, who in truth wishes to *walk on.* I wish they would be moved who are nearer.' This letter from the chairman was certainly a singular one, for it announced no less than a determination to take the Punjab, Captain Burnes being promised the conduct of the expedition. Sir John Hobhouse, in his speech to the House of Commons on the 23rd June, 1842, states that 'a despatch to Lord Auckland at the end of October, 1838, instructed his lordship in council to pursue *very nearly* the same course, which, it afterwards appeared, he had adopted without knowing our opinions.' It appears, therefore, his lordship did not pursue *quite* the course recommended by Sir John Hobhouse and the Secret Committee, and it is not impossible the slight error was made of marching to Kabul instead of to Lahore—at least, such may be inferred from this letter of the chairman, who was one of the Secret Committee. This letter was sent by Captain Burnes to Lord Auckland through the private secretary, Mr. Colvin, and came back with the expression of his lordship's approval." -

Mason's *Travels*, Vol. III, pp. 471-472.

* Kaye's Lives, II. p. 36.

Right Hon. George, Earl of Auckland, G.C.B.

Sir Alexander Burnes, C. B. in the costume of Bokhara

also. But, unfortunately, he died shortly after the conclusion of the Tri-partite Treaty to which he was a party.

It is unnecessary to mention in detail the movements of troops from various quarters—from the Bombay side, which navigating the Indus passed through Sindh and Baluchistan and also from Northern India, which passed through the Panjab and Khyber Pass, and their entrance into Afghanistan. It is equally unnecessary to name the various military officers who were in command of these troops.

But it is necessary to allude to the manner in which the Amirs of Sindh were treated by the British Government of India on the occasion of this expedition into Afghanistan. Without the consent of the Sindh Amirs of Hydarabad, the British troops forced their passage up the Indus and through their country, and when they resented the conduct of the Christian Government of India which was against all precedents of International Law and which no existing treaty with them allowed, they were threatened with extermination. *Nolens volens* they submitted.*

"The Ameers were known to be weak ; and they were believed to be wealthy. Their money was to be taken ; their country to be occupied ; their treaties to be set aside at the point of the bayonet, but amidst a shower of hypocritical expressions of friendship and good will."†

But the British Government were not content with forcing the passage of their troops through the territory of the Amirs, but contributions were also exacted from them. They were made to look upon themselves as vassals of Shah Suja—their King whom they were asked to support with money. A new treaty was forced upon them. Regarding this transaction it is recorded :

"Captain Eastwick seized the opportunity to administer the black dose of his mission to his hosts...The Amirs listened composedly...When the reading was over, the Biluchis showed great excitement. At this time a slight signal from their Highness would have been sufficient to terminate the lives of all our party under the swords of the barbarian and remorseless Biluchis...Mr. Nur Mohamed first observed, in Biluchi, to his two colleagues, 'Cursed be he who puts reliance upon the promises of the Feringees ;' and then, addressing himself seriously to the British representative, he spoke thus in Persian ; 'your treaties, I believe, are changeable at your pleasure and convenience ; is this the way to treat your friends and benefactors ? You asked our permission to allow your armies a free passage through our territories. We granted it without hesitation...Had we known that, after the entrance of your army into our lands, you would threaten our safety, and enforce another treaty upon us, demanding an annual tribute of three hundred thousand rupees and a ready payment of two million one hundred thousand rupees for the immediate expense of the army, we would, in such case, have adopted measures for the security of our country and persons...'

* Kaye writes :—

"Injustice ever begets injustice. It was determined by the Simla Council that Shah Soojah and the Army of the Indus should be sent through the country of the Ameers. To accomplish this, it was necessary that, in the first instance, an existing treaty should be set aside. When the Ameers consented to open the navigation of the Indus, it was expressly stipulated that no military stores should be conveyed along the river. But as soon as ever Lord Auckland had resolved to erect a friendly power in Afghanistan and to march a British army across the Indus, it became necessary to tear this prohibitory treaty to shreds, and to trample down the scruples of the Ameers." *History of the War in Afghanistan*. Vol. I, p. 398.

† *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 401.

"Captain Eastwick heard all this with calmness, and gave brief replies in Persian and Arabic proverbs...Mr. Nur Mohamed smiled, and spoke to his cousins in Biluchi,...and then, with sigh, he said to Captain Eastwick, 'I wish I could comprehend the meaning of the word 'friend' which you use. We cannot give a decisive reply to your present demands at once*.,...

Regarding the treatment meted out to the Amir of Khyrpur, a French author, J. P. Ferrier, says:

"When the British forces entered Sindh, the venerable chieftain (Mir Rustam of Khyrpoor) acceded to all the sacrifices imposed upon him. When asked by the English to *lend them during their operations in Afghanistan* the fortress of Bukkar, ... the demand appeared to him too humiliating. 'It is,' he said, 'at once the bulwark and the heart of my country, and my honor forbids that I should trust that in the hands of strangers.' Nevertheless, he allowed himself to be persuaded ... He *lent* them the fortress of Bukkar—it has never been out of their hands since, and to recompense his generous conduct towards them they despoiled him five years afterwards of the rest of his territory, and possessed themselves also of that of his brothers and nephews. The officers of General Napier invaded even the harems of these unfortunate princes and carried off the treasures, jewels and even the clothes of their women."

Is it any wonder then that the Sindh Amirs were provoked to intrigue and conspire against the Government of India, against whom they had legitimate grievances?

The excesses committed by British officers on the line of march will be understood from the following recorded by an English author accompanying the British force. He narrates what followed upon the capture of a number of wild Baluchis in the act of carrying off some of the camels of the expeditionary force:

"Every day was now destined to have its catastrophe; ten Beloochees had been summarily executed on this ground by Colonel Sandwith of the First Regiment of Native Cavalry, under written orders from Sir John Keane, as his Excellency passed with the Bengal Column. The first order was a verbal one, but Colonel Sandwith, not liking it, required a written one, and received it on half a sheet of note-paper. He has had the wisdom to preserve it. The poor wretches had their elbows secured, and were made to sit on the ground; when each had a bullet sent through his brain from a carbine. Lieutenant Lock, the officer who superintended the execution, spoke very feelingly of what he had been no willing agent in. Some of them, he said, sat quietly down and submitted to their fate: some resisted, and, to keep them quiet, the execution party fastened their heads together by their long luxuriant hair, which served to secure them for their destruction. Two young lads seemed horrified to bewilderment by their fears, and implored for mercy, seizing the feet and knees of the superintending officer, but they were made to sit down. Ere the fatal volley exploded, they were endeavouring to embrace, leaning their heads against each other, weeping bitterly their last farewell."†

The troops led by British officers entered Afghanistan and, like Cæsar, they could have exclaimed that they went, they saw and they conquered. The *ostensible* object with which the Government of India had proclaimed the war, was now gained. Shah Suja was re-installed on the throne of his ancestors and he was a mere puppet in the hands of his allies.

Dost Muhammad was made a prisoner and sent to India.

The objects for which the war in Afghanistan had been undertaken, were now accom-

* *Autobiography of Lutfullah*, pp. 294—296.

† *Narrative of the Campaign of the Army of the Indus in Sindh and Kabul* in 1838-39. By P. H. Kennedy, 2 vols. London, 1840, Vol. II, p. 228.

plished, and had the British been honest and sincere in their declarations, they should have immediately cleared out of Afghanistan. It was difficult for the Afghans to understand the British policy.

Writes Mohan Lal*:

"We neither took the reins of Government in our own hands, nor did we give them in full powers into the hands of the Shah. Inwardly or secretly we interfered in all transactions, contrary to the terms of our own engagement with the Shah ; and outwardly we wore the mask of neutrality. In this manner we gave annoyance to the king, on the one hand, and disappointment to the people on the other."

"Whatever we might boast of our diplomatic success during the campaign of Afghanistan, we were certainly very wrong in not keeping up our adherence, even for a short time, to those engagements and promises which we had so solemnly and faithfully made to the various chiefs, on return for their taking up our cause and abandoning their long known and established masters. Our letters, pledging our honour and Government to reward and appreciate their services for our good, were in their hands, and as soon as we found that the chiefs of Candahar were fled, and there was no necessity for wearing longer the airy garb of political civilities and promises, we commenced to fail in fulfilling them. There are, in fact, such numerous instances of violating our engagements and deceiving the people in our political proceedings, within what I am acquainted with, that it would be hard to assemble them in one series."†

The "game" which the British were playing in Afghanistan was of the same nature as they had successfully played in India, ever since the battle of Plassey. The position of Dost Muhammad was that of Shiraj-ud-dowla, and of Shah Suja that of Mir Jafar. Just as the British held the military occupation of Bengal, so their stay in Afghanistan was of the nature of a military occupation. Sir William Macnaghten, the ambassador or the chief of the Political Staff in Afghanistan, had his prototype in Clive. In fact, that model British Civilian was copying that arch-forger Clive in his dealings with the people of Afghanistan.

In India it is very easy to play off caste against caste, and creed against creed. Hence the administration of India can be carried on without much difficulty on the doctrine of *divide et impera.* But it was somewhat difficult to act upon it in Afghanistan, because the Afghans after all had no system of caste, and they were votaries of one creed. Yet Macnaghten and his assistants left no stone unturned to act on the doctrine of *divide et impera* and other maxims of Machiavellian policy in their dealings with the people of Afghanistan. In Mohan Lal they found a tool ready at hand to give effect to their nefarious scheme. Kaye writes:

"The Moonshee (Mohun Lal) seems to have been endowed with a genius for traitor-making, the lustre of which remained undimmed to the very end of the War."§

"This Mohun Lal had other work entrusted to him.....He was not directed merely to appeal to the cupidity of the chiefs, by offering them large sums of money to exert their influence in our favour. He was directed, also, to offer rewards for the heads of the principal insurgents. As early as the 5th of November [1841], Lieutenant John Conolly, who was in attendance upon Shah Soojah in the Balla Hissar, wrote thus to Mohun Lal :

* Life of Dost Mahamadad Khan, I, p. 313.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 208-209.

§ *History of War Afghanistan*, p. 459 of Vol. I, fourth Edition of 1890.

"Tell the Kuzzilbash chiefs, Shereen Khan, Naib Sheriff, in fact, all the chiefs of Sheeah persuasion, to join against the rebels. You can promise one lakh of rupees to Khan Shereen on the condition of his killing and seizing the rebels and arming all the Sheeahs, and immediately attacking all rebels. This is the time for the Sheeahs to do good service. Tell the chiefs who are well disposed, to send respectable agents to the Envoy. Try and spread 'nifak'* among the rebels. In everything that you do consult me, and write very often."

"And in a postscript to this letter appeared the ominous words, I promise 10,000 rupees for the head of each of the principal rebel chiefs."†

"But the Moonshee, perplexed by doubts rather than burdened with scruples, did not see very clearly at first how the chiefs were to be taken off; so he wrote to the envoy that 'he could not find out by Lieutenant Conolly's notes how the rebels are to be assassinated, but the men now employed promise to go into their houses and cut off their heads when they may be without attendants.'

"The victims said to have been first marked for the assassin's knife were Abdoolah Khan and Meer Musjedjee."§

The policy which they were acting upon was not so much "oriental" but "occidental" in its nature.

The scandalous conduct of the politicals and other officers of the British race should also be referred to here. It will be well to express their conduct in the words of one of their own compatriots, the renowned historian of the War in Afghanistan.

"The temptations which are most difficult to withstand, were not withstood by our English officers. The attractions of the women of Caubul they did not know how to resist. The Afghans are very jealous of the honour of their women; and there were things done in Caubul which covered them with shame and roused them to revenge. The inmate of the Mahomedan Zenana was not unwilling to visit the quarters of the Christian stranger. For two long years, now, had this shame been burning itself into the hearts of the Caubulees; and there were some men of note and influence among them who knew themselves to be thus wronged. Complaints were made; but they were made in vain. The scandal was open, undisguised, notorious. Redress was not to be obtained. The evil was not in course of suppression. It went on till it became intolerable and the injured then began to see that the only remedy was in their own hands. It is enough to state broadly the painful fact."**

The natives of Afghanistan saw their harems invaded, their women ravished, their country plundered, and everything which they held sacred, desecrated.

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* It was against this policy that Sir Alexander Burnes wrote:

"*Divide et impera* is a temporising creed at any time, and if the Afghans are united, we and they bid defiance to Persia, and instead of distant relations we have everything under our eye, and a steadily progressing influence all along the Indus."

The above sentences are from a long letter of Burnes written from Husan Abdal on 2nd June 1838 before the Christian invasion of Afghanistan and addressed to Macnaghten. He rightly observed in the same letter, that "the noble Marquis (Wellesley), in his splendid administration, made the Afghans feel our weight through Persia, and arrested the evil. We should have had none of the present vexations, if we had dealt with the Afghans direct. We then counteracted them through Persia; we now wish to do it through the Sikhs. . ."

Page 242, Parliamentary Papers of 1859 (East India, Cabul and Afghanistan.)

† *Ibid.*, p. 202.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 218—219.

** *Ibid.*, pp. 143—144.

Assassination of Sir Alexander Burnes at Kabul

The sight which met their eyes day after day was enough to make their blood boil with indignation at the conduct of the British. It was much more than the flesh and blood of any man, especially of the proud Afghan, could put up with. Long centuries of subjection have made Indians peace-loving creatures. But the haughty Highlanders of Afghanistan, whose necks never chafed under any foreign yoke, could not tolerate the misdeeds and high-handed proceedings of the English any longer in their country. They had formed a very low opinion of the English. They found them to be wanting in all sense of honour, honesty and morality.

So the Afghans, who had suffered long and patiently, seeing that the English did not fulfil all the promises which they had made, revolted against them and determined to clear their country of their hated presence. The puppet whom the English had set up was an object of great abhorrence to them. Shah Suja, according to their mode of thinking (and it must be admitted that it was the right one too), was the cause of all their troubles and miseries. He should be removed from their country. So the throne of Kabul restored to Shah Suja, through the aid of the English, was not a bed of roses to him. No, the restored throne cost him his life. The poor fellow, when he made up his mind to bid adieu to his native land for ever and return once more to the place of refuge he had found in the Company's territory, and when he was on his way thither, was shot like a dog by one of his infuriated countrymen.

Another man whom the inhabitants of Afghanistan hated most bitterly was Sir Alexander Burnes. They looked upon him as a mean and despicable wretch, who, after having sojourned in their country and been treated with most lavish hospitality, betrayed them and brought on all the calamities from which they were suffering. He appeared to them to have been a spy. International Law allows spies to be given the shortest shrift. So Burnes deserved a traitor's death. And this was what actually befell him. He was murdered in broad daylight by the infuriated mob of Kabul.

Macnaghten could not play with safety the role of Clive in Afghanistan or the English just what they had done in Bengal some eighty years previously. Afghanistan was made too hot for them, and as prudence is the best part of valour, they considered their safety lay in retreat from that country. So they promised to restore Dost Muhammad to the throne of Afghanistan. A treaty to that effect was made with Dost Muhammad's son Akbar Khan. The behaviour of the English was anything but honest and straightforward in their dealings with the Afghans. Especially their envoy, Macnaghten, had become infamous from his brutal and inhuman conduct, and the nation to which he belonged could not be safely trusted by the Afghans. So the latter demanded hostages of the English as a guarantee that they would fulfil their promise by clearing out and restoring Dost Muhammad as ruler of Afghanistan.

But Macnaghten was not honest in his professions and the proposals which he made to Akbar Khan. He meant treachery. Kaye, as an apologist of his compatriot Macnaghten, writes:

"It is not easy to group into one lucid and intelligible whole all the many shifting schemes and devices which distracted the last days of the envoy's career. It is probable that at this time he

could have given no very clear account of the game which he was playing. ......His mind was by this time unhinged—his intellect was clouded; his moral perceptions were deadened....'

But his treacherous conduct cost Macnaghten his life. Macnaghten had a conference with Akbar Khan in which he was shot dead by that Afghan chief. Of course, English historians have accused Akbar Khan of treachery. But Syed Feda Husain, a recent Muhammadan writer, after consulting the contemporary records of that period, has recorded his opinion that treacherous conduct should not be attributed to Akbar Khan but to the Envoy. In a review of his work, entitled "Nairang-i-Afghanistan," in *The Modern Review* for February 1907, p. 224, we read:

"Macnaghten wrote to Akbar Khan assuring him of his friendship and asking for an interview and concluded his letter by warning Akbar Khan against some of his sirdars and advising him to get himself rid of them. He at the same time wrote to these very sirdars inciting them against Akbar Khan. Akbar on receiving this letter called a council of his sirdars and showed it to them. Then the sirdars, too, brought forward their letters and the 'diplomacy' of Macnaghten was exposed. Akbar Khan kept quiet for the time being and arranged the interview as described by Macnaghten. When Macnaghten went to meet Akbar Khan, he ordered a portion of his troops to lie in ambush, instructing their commander to rush forward at a given signal. When the interview took place, Akbar Khan began to reproach Macnaghten for his treachery and asked him to explain the meaning of those letters, written to himself and his sirdars. When Macnaghten was trying to explain his conduct, an Afghan came running to Akbar Khan and, speaking in Pashtu, informed him of the movement of English troops, which had been deputed to lie in ambush. On this both Akbar Khan and Macnaghten stood up and an altercation ensued. The first shot was fired by Macnaghten and he was killed by Akbar Khan. Now, if these facts are correct, small blame attaches to Akbar Khan for killing Macnaghten. And incidents such as these go a long way to explain the distrust and hatred with which the Afghans regard the 'Feringhees.'"

Thus then perished Shah Suja, Burnes and Macnaghten—the triumvirate who were the principal actors in the drama of Afghan politics. The British force which occupied Afghanistan was now compelled to retire from that country.

The retreat began in the depth of winter and after the British had been sufficiently humiliated by having to keep in the custody of the Afghan authorities some of their officers with their wives as hostages. But the retreat proved more disastrous to the English than any field of battle. All those men, women, children and followers who sallied out of Kabul on their way back to India, except in one solitary instance, either perished on the road or were made captive by the Afghans. That solitary instance was] of that Dr. Brydon, who arrived at Jelalabad and reported his belief that he was the sole survivor of an army of some sixteen thousand men.

Such then was the story of the first attempt made for the establishment of the British supremacy in Kabul and its failure with great humiliation. The First Afghan War was not only a blunder but a crime and a sin. "The wages of sin is death." It proved more than death to the British. Their prestige was gone and the reputation of their being ever successful in military strategy or Machiavellian diplomacy was blasted as if for ever. Kaye in concluding his chapter on the retreat from Kabul writes:

"It would be unprofitable to enter into an inquiry regarding all the minute details of misdirection and mismanagement, making up the great sum of human folly, which was the permitted means of our overthrow. In the pages of a heathen writer over such a story as this would be cast the shadow of a tremendous Nemesis. The Christian historian uses other words, but the same prevailing idea runs, like a great river, through his narrative; and the reader recognises one great truth, that the wisdom of our statesmen is but foolishness, and the might of our armies is but weakness, when the curse of God is sitting heavily upon an unholy cause. 'For the Lord God of recompenses shall surely requite'."

The procedure of the British to retrieve their reputation for military skill, and the means adopted to rescue the prisoners of their creed and race from the hands of the Afghans and the manner in which they wreaked their vengeance on the Moslem Highlanders, belong properly to the regime of another Governor-General and not that of Lord Auckland. So we close here the first part of the narrative of the Afghan War.

CHAPTER LXXII

LORD ELLENBOROUGH'S ADMINISTRATION (1842-1844)

Lord Auckland's administration, especially the war in Afghanistan ending in disasters unparalleled in the history of Anglo-Indian government, as well as the critical situation of the Indian finances, made him very unpopular with almost every section of people in England and India. The muddle and confusion in which the Afghan and Indian affairs were thrown required a man at the helm of the supreme local government in India who was well acquainted with Indian politics and not a mere novice in Indian statecraft. The authorities at home thought that they had such a man in Lord Ellenborough. His lordship had three times held the office of President of the Board of Control, East India Company, a situation which corresponds to that of the Secretary of State for India in modern times.* He had also taken part in the debate in Parliament on the occasion of the renewal of the East India Company's charter in 1833.

The War in Afghanistan was a very unpopular one. The authorities wanted to terminate it and withdraw the British forces from that country with as good grace as possible. Lord Ellenborough had always denounced that war in terms of severe censure. On September 15, 1841, he wrote to Her Majesty the Queen Victoria as follows :

"It appeared that the political and military charges now incurred beyond the Indus amounted to 1,250,000£ a year ; that the estimate of the expense of the additions made to the army in India since April 1838, was 1,138,750£ a year ; and that the deficit of Indian revenue in 1839-40 having been 2,425,625£, a further deficit of 1,987,000£ was expected in 1840-41.

"Your Majesty must be too well informed of the many evils consequent upon financial embarrassment and entertains too deep a natural affection for all your subjects, not to desire that in whatever advice your Majesty's confidential servants may tender to your Majesty with respect to the policy to be observed in Afghanistan, they should have especial regard to the effect which the protracted continuance of military operations in that country, still more any extension of them to a new and distant field, would have upon the finances of India, and thus upon the welfare of eighty millions of people who acknowledge your Majesty's rule."

So the choice of the authorities naturally fell on him and he was accordingly appointed Governor-General of India to succeed Auckland. His policy in governing India was foreshadowed in his speeches, especially that of July 5, 1833, delivered from his place in the House of Lords. On that occasion, his lordship is reported to have said :

* In his speech before departing for India, at the dinner given in his honour by the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company, November 3, 1841, Lord Ellenborough said :

"Sir, it is one of the advantages I derive from having three times held the office of President of the Board of Control, first through the confidence of my noble friend [the Duke of Wellington] and since twice through the confidence of my right honourable friend Sir Robert Peel, that I proceed to India with some knowledge, and therefore, with no ungenerous distrust, of those I am appointed to govern."

Left above—Shah Shujah-ul-Moolk

Below—Sir W. H. Macnaghten, Bart.

Right—Dost Mahomed Khan

"No man in his senses would propose to place the political and military power in India in the hands of the natives, ...

"Our very existence in India depended upon the exclusion of the natives from military and political power in that country. We were there in a situation not of our own seeking, in a situation from which we could not recede without producing bloodshed from one end of India to the other. We had won the Empire of India by the sword, and must preserve it by the same means, doing at the same time everything that was consistent with our existence there for the good of the people."*

Yes, Ellenborough was an ardent advocate of holding India by the sword. So when he was appointed Governor-General, he turned for advice to the two brothers, the Marquess Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington.†

The parts which these two brothers played in the closing years of the eighteenth and the first few years of the nineteenth centuries in robbing millions of Indians of their independence and firmly imposing the yoke of the rule of England on their necks, are such well known facts of British Indian history that they need not be dilated upon here. Ellenborough's guides, friends and philosophers were then the two brothers named above. He tried to emulate their examples and follow in their footsteps.

But the diplomatists of the Christian countries of the West know how to cover their ulterior designs. Lord Ellenborough was no exception to that rule. He very loudly proclaimed that as Governor-General of India he would govern that country upon peace principles and do everything in his power to direct the due cultivation of the arts of peace. At the dinner given in his honour by the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company, November 3, 1841, before departing for India, Ellenborough said :

"To terminate the war with China by a peace honourable to the Crown and desirable in its provisions to establish tranquillity on both banks of the Indus—in a word *to restore peace to Asia*, and with peace, that sense of entire security, without which peace itself is almost valueless, from

* Hansard, Vol. XIX, third series, page 191.

† In his speech before departing for India, at the dinner given in his honour by the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company, Nov. 3, 1841, he said:

"If there be anything, however, which gives to me advantages over other men in the prosecution of that sole object of a good Government, the conferring of benefits upon the people, it is that, placed thirteen years ago at the head of the India Board by the noble duke near me [the Duke of Wellington], I have, from that time to the present, communicated confidentially with him upon all great questions relating to India, and I have endeavoured to make myself acquainted with the general views and principles according to which he thought those questions should be decided.......It is my greatest satisfaction—it is my highest pride, that I proceed to take upon myself the government of India in the possession of his confidence. It is the best support that Government could receive."

Ellenborough was always for war and not peace. Lord Colchester, who edited his letters and correspondence, wrote in the *Nineteenth Century* for August, 1899 (p. 238):

"It is quite true that Lord Ellenborough's ambition was to be a military statesman. A boy during the earlier part of the great war with Napoleon, approaching manhood at the commencement of the Peninsular struggle, he had originally desired to enter on a military career, and when at the wish of his father he gave up such aspirations for Parliamentary and political life, he desired to influence military as well as civil affairs by the power of speech, which, as he said, was the great instrument of an English statesman."

that peace, so secured, to draw the means of creating a surplus revenue, the best guarantee of public improvement, and of liberal, even *honest* Government—in possession of that surplus revenue, to emulate the magnificence of the Mahomedan Emperors, in their great works of public utility, to perfect and extend the canals of irrigation . . .gradually, I say, gradually and cautiously, and with due circumspection and regard for the feelings and even the prejudices of the natives of India to impart to them whatever of the useful knowledge we have ourselves inherited or acquired, and thus to elevate the character and extend the happiness of that great and faithful people."

The sentiments regarding the promotion of the happiness of the natives of India were very noble, but they were never carried into execution. Hence his saying that *"henceforth my first duty is to the people of India,"* should be regarded as a mere hypocritical expression of one trained in the school of Machiavellian diplomacy.

It has been said above that he turned for advice and guidance to the two brothers, the Marquess Wellesley and the Duke of Wellington. Wellesley was still alive, and the advice which he gave to Ellenborough may be judged from the memorandum from which the following extracts are made :

"Although I never evinced a warlike policy in India as suitable to our condition or calculated either for our safety or our glory, I was not ignorant that our tenure of India originally rested on a military basis, and must be preserved by the maintenance of our military strength.

"The condition in which I found our army was, therefore, a total departure from the first necessary principles of our existence among the Powers of India, and I proceeded instantly to correct that vital defect.

"This is the first object which must be brought under the consideration of the Governor-General of India. ... ...

. . . "At all times, therefore, the British power in India should possess, and maintain in activity and discipline, an adequate army (as it was termed in my time) 'in the field.'

"The principal stations of the army should be on our northern and western frontiers.

* * *

"Your Lordship, I am satisfied, would reject Afghanistan and Cabul, with their rocks, sands, deserts, ice and snow, even if Shah Shooja had bequeathed them as a peace offering to England; perhaps the ends of criminal justice may require the presence of a British force there for some time. I hope this point will be left entirely to your discretion.

"In a case somewhat similar I was enabled to bring the murderers of Mr. C. Zerry and other officers to justice. If your Lordship can do the same by the murderers of Sir W. Macnaghten, I shall rejoice."

Ellenborough was on more intimate terms with the Duke of Wellington than with the Marquess Wellesley. Their correspondence relating to Indian affairs has been edited and published by Lord Colchester, to which very frequent reference will be made.

It is necessary here to say that Ellenborough tried to act on every letter of the advice given to him by Wellesley. Of course, it was impossible to retain Afghanistan while the Panjab and Sindh were still independent. So it was a counsel of perfection on the part of Wellesley to tell Ellenborough to "reject Afghanistan and Kabul."

Before leaving England, he marked out the Panjab and Nepal as the states whose independence he was desirous of destroying and annexing them to the British dominions. In his letter, dated October 15, 1841, to the Duke of Wellington, he wrote:

"I have requested Lord Fitzroy to employ him [Lieut. Durand] at once in obtaining all the information he can with respect to the Panjab, and making a military memorandum upon the

country for your consideration. I am most anxious to have your opinion as to the general principles at least upon which a campaign against that country should be conducted.

"Lieutenant Durand will likewise make a memorandum upon the frontier country of Nepal, and recall to your recollectjon the circumstances of the war with that state."

Again, he commenced his letter of 26th October to the Duke of Wellington as follows :

"I trust that the necessity will not arise while I am in India of making war either on the Punjab or on Nepal, but I wished, before I left England, to have your general opinion as to the plan upon which any such war, if necessary, should be conducted, in the same manner in which I obtained many years ago, for the future use of the Government of India, your opinion as to the plan upon which any new war with the Burmese should be conducted. . . . . . .

"What I desired, therefore, was your opinion, founded, as far as it could be, upon the imperfect geographical information which can be given to you as to the best mode of attacking the Punjab. The Sikh Army is generally collected about Lahore. They have, however, a force of 8,000 or 10,000 men, very mutinous and lately coerced by Afghans, in and about Peshawar."

The views expressed in the above letters of 15th and 26th October, 1841, when compared with his speech of 3rd November, 1841, extracts from which have already been given above, would lead one without any difficulty to conclude that Ellenborough was a very apt pupil of Talleyrand, according to whom language has been given unto us to conceal and not to express our thoughts.

Ellenborough arrived in Calcutta on the 28th Feburary, 1842 and immediately assumed the office of the Governor-General of India. He prepared a Memorandum on the position of India, dated March 18, 1842, for the information of Her Majesty the Queen Victoria. Regarding the Afghan War, he wrote:

"The division of the [British] army which is at Candahar is incapable of making any extensive movement, either in advance or retreat by the almost total want of camels and other animals."

"At Peshawar there is a Sikh army, hostile to the Afghans, but hostile to the British troops, too,...

"The events which have recently occurred in Afghanistan render the termination of the war with China an object of the greatest importance and of the most pressing nature."

Ellenborough left Calcutta for the Upper Provinces to be near the frontier. By April, 1842, the British forces under Major-General Pollock had retrieved some of the lost ground in Afghanistan, had forced their passage through the Khyber Pass and were in possession of Ali Masjid.

The British protege, Shah Suja was murdered on the 5th April, 1842. So Ellenborough thought it prudent to withdraw altogether from Afghanistan and leave the Afghans to manage their own affairs. In his letter from Benares, dated 21st April, 1842, he wrote to the Queen :

"Your Majesty's troops being redeemed from the state of peril in which they have so long been placed by their scattered positions, their imperfect equipment, and their distance from their communications with India, it will become a subject for serious consideration whether they shall again advance upon Afghanistan by a new and central line of operation ; or whether it will not be more advisable, our military reputation having been re-established, to terminate in conjunction with the Sikh Government, those operations in pursuance of the Tripartite Treaty to which that Government was a party."

Again, on May 16, 1842, he wrote from Allahabad to the Queen that

"The Shah was murdered at Cabul on the 5th of April. Under present circumstances, considering the divided state of Afghanistan, it has been deemed prudent to abstain from recognising any succession."

He was desirous of seizing this opportunity to put an end to the Tripartite Treaty, which came into existence in the regime of his predecessor Lord Auckland. Of course, he never thought that such a measure would be a gross breach of faith. He wrote to the Queen from Allahabad on June 7, 1842:

"It has appeared that the present state of things in which there exists in Afghanistan no constituted authority capable of executing the Tripartite Treaty, is the most favourable for the declaration by the Governments of India and of Lahore that that treaty is at an end,..."

With the nations of Europe, although they are worshippers of Christ, who taught his followers "to love those that hate you, to bless those that curse you" and also to turn the left cheek to those who smite you on the right, revenge is sweet. So to avenge the murder of Sir W. Macnaghten, Ellenborough meditated treachery. He wrote to the Queen Victoria on the 17th August, 1842, that,

"He has deemed it proper to instruct Major-General Pollock, in the event of Mahomed Akbar Khan's coming into his hands without any previous condition for the preservation of his life, to subject that chief to trial and, if he should be convicted, to punishment for murder of Sir W. Macnaghten in the same manner in which the Major-General would deal with any other person accused and convicted of murder under similar circumstances."

Again on Oct. 5, 1842, he wrote to the Queen:

"Lord Ellenborough has authorised the offering of a reward for that chief's (Akbar Khan's) delivery to the British army. He is to be considered only as the murderer of a British minister, not as a general at the head of a national force."

It can be easily guessed how Akbar Khan would have been dealt with, had he fallen into the hands of the British, who were thirsting for his blood.

With the successes achieved by General Pollock over the Afghans at Ali Masjid Ellenborough was willing to exchange prisoners of war and withdraw altogether from Afghanistan. Such seem to have been his instructions to General Pollock. But that officer went beyond his instructions. Writing to the Duke of Wellington on June 7, 1842, he said:

"A greater difficulty exists in the influence of the political agents, the men anxious for revenge, and the others naturally clinging to the hope of relieving the prisoners. All these, since his arrival at Jelalabad, have got round Major-General Pollock; have led him to misunderstand the plainest instructions, to miscalculate the value of objects, and to act upon the passion of others, not upon his own reason."

The Iron Duke was much enraged with the conduct of General Pollock. In reply to the above letter he wrote to Ellenborough, on August 6, 1842:

"But it is astonishing that General Pollock should not have obeyed your instructions in respect to the exchange of prisoners. If an exchange had been effected, you might have withdrawn the troops, at any time, and nobody could have whispered a camp hint."

But Pollock disobeyed the orders of Ellenborough and marched on to Kabul, where, to show the spirit of Christian charity, he ordered his troops to commit

excesses. Referring to this conduct of Pollock, the Duke of Wellington wrote to Ellenborough on February 4, 1843 :

"I am much more uneasy about the thanks to General Pollock than I am about those to yourself. I cannot understand how a man who knows what soldiers are made of, could think of giving an order for the destruction of the bazar and two mosques at Cabul, and not be sensible that such destruction must and would be followed by the pillage and destruction of the town itself; and that if he thought proper to do the former, he did not put himself at the head of half the army and see the destruction effected, and to take care to protect the town from the pillage and destruction which it was certain must be the consequence by the other half of the army."

Although the British troops were victorious, it was impossible for them to remain long in Afghanistan without those scenes being re-enacted which led to the murder of Macnaghten and Burnes. So the British, flushed with victory, did not dictate any terms to the Afghans, did not ask for the surrender of the persons of the murderers of their Envoy and chief Political, or of those who violated the honor of their women. Prudence was considered the best part of valor, and so they made haste to withdraw from Afghanistan and set unconditionally the ex-Amir Dost Muhammad at liberty. Ellenborough, in his letter dated 15th November, 1842, wrote to the Queen :

"Your Majesty will likewise find annexed to this memorandum the general order whereby it was made known that, the British prisoners having been recovered from the Afghans, all the Afghan prisoners would be set at liberty, including Dost Mahomed and his family, as soon as the armies had crossed the Indus."

"Lord Ellenborough trusts that your Majesty will approve of this act, at once of policy and of clemency. . . . Dost Mahomed may recover his former authority, but he has suffered severely, and his whole object will be to maintain himself in Cabul. He may give trouble to the Sikhs at Jellalabad; but they think they can make arrangements with him which will lead to their quiet occupation of that place, and it is with their entire concurrence that Dost Mahomed is released."

Ellenborough considered a demonstration necessary. He wrote to the Duke of Wellington from Allahabad on May 17, 1842:

"At Hyderabad and in Scinde, as well as at Nepaul and in the Saugor district and in Bundelcund, I see the indication of the change with respect to our power, which the disasters at Cabul have created in all men's opinions, and this makes me more anxious to get back the army from Afghanistan. I have made the most of the victory of Jellalabad. I have issued general orders a little in the French style; but they have their effect, I have given honours and rewards with a large hand; and my old colleague, Sir W. Casement, tells me that the general order I enclose is worth 10,000 men. I do all I can to gratify the officers and soldiers, and I really think I may depend upon the most zealous support of the whole army."

In the eleventh century, Mahmud Ghaznavi, *in one of his* invasions of India, removed the gates of the Temple at Somnath as a booty to his native place. Mahmud was a barbarian and as his country was devoid of any works of art, the carving and decorative art exhibited on the gates, in short their beauty, captivated the fancy of that iconoclast, and after their removal to his native place, it is said that they were made to serve as gates to his mausoleum. As a trophy of their triumphs in Afghanistan, the British troops brought these gates with them to India. To make a demonstration,

the gates were carried in regular procession from Afghanistan through the Panjab and it was proposed to restore them to the temple at Somnath to which they originally belonged. But the gates did not proceed any further than Agra.

There was a deep policy in carrying the gates in regular procession throughout Hindustan. Ellenborough was anxious to conciliate the Hindus.* He believed that it was altogether impossible to reconcile the Muhammadans to the British rule. For nearly a thousand years there has not been much love lost between the votaries of the Cross and the Crescent. The Christians even to this day have not given up their spirit of crusades against the followers of Islam. And Ellenborough as a Christian could not conceal his antipathy towards Moslems. Writing to the Duke from Simla, on October 4, 1842, Ellenborough said :

"I could not have credited the extent to which the Mahomedans desired our failure in Afghanistan, unless I had heard here circumstances which prove that the feeling pervaded even those entirely dependent upon us. Here there is a great preponderance of Mahomedans. I am told that the guns produced absolute consternation visible in their countenances. One Ayah threw herself upon the ground in an agony of despair. The Commander-in-Chief observed it amongst his own servants. I fired forty-two guns for Ghuzni and Cabul ; the twenty-second gun—which announced that all was finished—was what overcame the Mahomedans. The Hindoos, on the other hand, are delighted. It seems to me most unwise, when we are sure of the hostility of one-tenth, not to secure the enthusiastic support of the nine-tenths, which are faithful,......I would make the most of our successes and of the recovery of the gates of the temple, treating it ostensibly as a great military triumph, but knowing very well that the Hindoos will value it as the guarantee of the future security of themselves and their religion against Mussalmans. All those who best know India tell me that the effect will be very great indeed, and I think it will."

Again, writing to the Duke on January 18, 1843, Ellenborough said:

"I have every reason to think that the restoration of the gates of the Temple of Somnauth has conciliated and gratified the great mass of the Hindoo population. I have no reason to suppose that it has offended the Mussalmans ; but I cannot close my eyes to the belief that that race is fundamentally hostile to us, and therefore our true policy is to conciliate the Hindoos, . . ."

All the fuss regarding the gates of Somnath was a stroke of policy, for it was considered expedient to conciliate the Hindus. Now, it is a fact that those gates were not the gates of Somnath. Perhaps Ellenborough knew as much. Therefore all the

* Ellenborough wrote to the Queen in October, 1842:

"The gates of the Temple of Somnath have been brought away by Major-General Nott. These gates were taken to Ghuzni by Sultan Mahmood, in the year 1024. The tradition of the invasion of India by Sultan Mahmood in that year, and of the carrying away of the gates, after the destruction of the temple, is still current in every part of India, and known to every one. So earnest is the desire of the Hindoos, and of all who are not Mussulmans, to recover the gates of the temple, that when, ten or twelve years ago, Runjeet Singh was making arrangements with Shah Shoojah for assisting him in the endeavour to recover his throne, he wished to make a stipulation that when Shah Shoojah recovered his power he should restore the gates to India, and Shah Shooja refused.

"Lord Ellenborough transmits for your Majesty's information a copy of the address he intends to publish on announcing that the gates of the temple will be restored.

"The progress of the gates from Ferozepore to Somnath will be one great national triumph, and their restoration to India will endear the Government to the whole people."

grand procession with which the so-called gates of Somnath were paraded throughout Hindustan was got up for the sake of political expediency.*

But Christians of the orthodox type in England were enraged with the conduct of Ellenborough for the reverence he showed to the gates of a heathen temple. In the British Parliament as well as outside it, he was severely criticised for his conduct. On the ninth of March, 1843, Mr. Vernon Smith, Member for Northampton, made the following motion :

"That this House, having regard to the high and important functions of the Governor-General of India, the mixed character of the native population, and the recent measures of the Court of Directors for discontinuing any seeming sanction to idolatry in India, is of opinion that the conduct of Lord Ellenborough in issuing the General Orders of the sixteenth of November, 1842 and in addressing the letter of the same date to all the chiefs, princes, and people of India, respecting the restoration of the gates of a temple to Somnauth, is unwise, indecorous and reprehensible."

The motion was rejected by 242 votes to 157. Lord (then Mr.) Macaulay delivered a speech condemning Ellenborough in no measured terms. He said that

"The charge against Lord Ellenborough is that he has insulted the religion of his own country and the religion of millions of the Queen's Asiatic subjects in order to pay honor to an idol, . . . The Mahometans are a minority, but their importance is much more than proportioned to their number : for they are an united, a zealous, an ambitious, a warlike class. . . . . Nobody who knows anything of the Mahometans of India can doubt that this affront to their faith will excite their fiercest indignation. Their susceptibility on such points is extreme. Some of the most serious disasters that have ever befallen us in India have been caused by that susceptibility."

Ellenborough justified his conduct on the ground of political expediency. Writing to the Duke on March 22, 1843, he said :

"I do not care what may be said about Somnauth gates. The measure was a politic measure for India—and I ought only to look to India ..If I were to abstain from doing anything here which could be disapproved by gentlemen over their firesides in England, I should lose India. You know better than any one the difficulties I found on my arrival. *I have only been able to meet those difficulties by acts and language which, even in India, I should not myself have adopted under ordinary circumstances.*"

The words put in italics indicate the Machiavellian policy he pursued in the administration of India.

The First Afghan War ended. It cannot be said that it reflected any credit either on the military or the civil service of India. Neither the general in the field nor the statesman in the cabinet, could be congratulated on the part he played in this nefarious transaction. The occidental diplomatist, saturated with the principles of Machiavelli and hence not playing a straightforward game, was stewed in his own juice as it were. But the Christian Government of India spent money like water, because that money did not come out of the pocket of any Christian native of England but of the 'heathen'

* Ellenborough's hatred of the followers of the creed of the Crescent may be perhaps accounted for by his wife deserting him and living with an Arab Chief, named Shaykh Mijiwal El Mezrab of Damascus, whom Lady Burton refers to as "Lady Ellenborough's Bedawin husband" (*The Life of Sir Richard Burton*, Vol I, p. 180).

The "franko-phobia" of the Marquess of Wellesley also was explainable on a similar ground.

natives of India. They were generous with other people's purse. And their apparent success was due to this lavish expenditure in Afghanistan and to the bribing of the Afghans. The First Afghan War was not only a blunder and a crime but a positive sin.

The British expeditions against the Musalmans of Afghanistan miserably failed. Their prestige was lowered and their military reputation was shattered. To show that they could beat somebody, the Christians very unjustly made war on another Muhammadan Power, *viz.*, the Amirs of Sindh.

Before the British expedition started for Afghanistan, the then Commander-in-Chief Sir Henry Fane had expressed his opinion that it was not desirable for his co-religionists and compatriots to move west of the Sutlej. In 1837, he had written to Sir Charles (afterwards Lord) Metcalfe:

"Every advance you might make beyond the Sutlej to the Westward, in my opinion adds to your military weakness.....If you want your empire to expand, expand it over Oude or over Gwalior, and the remains of the Maratha empire. Make yourselves complete sovereigns of all within your bounds. *But let alone the Far West. (Life of Lord Metcalfe,* Vol. II, p. 306.)*

Auckland's successors, Ellenborough, Hardinge and Dalhousie acted on this advice of Sir Henry Fane which accounts for their annexations of the Punjab, Sindh, Nagpur, Oudh and several other principalities by fraud and force.

* Kaye's *History of War in Afghanistan*, Vol. I, pp. 359 and 360, 4th Edition, 1890.

CHAPER LXXIII

THE ANNEXATION OF SINDH

The British ought to have been grateful to the Amirs of Sindh for the help they rendered them in the Afghan War. But it has been truly observed that there is no gratitude in politics.

Every act of the Sindh drama shows scenes of enormity and foul play on the part of the British actors. According to the treaty of August 22, 1809, between the British Government and Sindh, it was stipulated that—

"Art. 1. There shall be eternal friendship between the British Government and that of Sindh, ...

"2. Enmity shall never appear between the two states.

"3. The mutual despatch of the Vakeels of both Governments, namely, the British Government and Sindhian Government shall continue.

"4. The Government of Sindh will not allow the establishment of the tribe of the French in Sindh."

But the British violated the spirit of the treaty and coveted the land of the Moslem rulers of Sindh when under the euphemistic phrase, "Navigation of the Indus," they surveyed that river without the consent of the Amirs. It is recorded by Sir James Mackintosh in his journal dated February 9, 1812, that,

"A Hindoo merchant, named Derryana, under the mask of friendship, had been continually alarming the Sind Government against the English mission. On being reproved, he said that, although some of his reports respecting their immediate designs might not be quite correct, yet this tribe never began as friends without ending as enemies, by seizing the country which they entered with the most amicable professions."

"A shrewd dog, said Mackintosh.

So when Burnes ascended the Indus, a Syad on the water's edge lifted up his hands, and exclaimed,

"Sind is now gone, since the English have seen the river, which is the road to its conquest."

The English meant to annihilate the independent existence of Sindh when they concluded that Tripartite Treaty with Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Shah Sujah. Kaye writes:

"that unhappy tripartite treaty between Shah Soojah, Runjeet Singh and the British Government —the source, Heaven only knows, of how much injustice and how much suffering,—was entered into in a most evil hour. From that hour of the 26th day of June 1838 the Ameers may date their ruin. From that hour they virtually ceased to exist as independent rulers. The fourth article of the treaty ran in these words: 'Regarding Shikarpore and the territory of Sindh lying on the right bank of the Indus, the Shah will agree to abide by what may be settled as right and proper, in conformity with the happy relations of friendship subsisting between the British Government and the—Ameers of Sindh?—no,—'the Maharaja.' The Ameers of Sindh were from this time forth to be treated as mere non-entities—weaklings to be turned to the best possible account.

"The Ameers of Sind were not parties to the treaty, but because the British Government entered into a treaty with Runjeet Singh and Shah Soojah, the operation of a previous treaty with the Ameers of Sindh *'must necessarily be suspended.'* And this is British faith!

"It is well for the strong to accuse the weak of subterfuges and evasions—to charge meanness and dishonesty upon the party who were driven to these straits; but is it, we ask, less perfidious to violate treaties as a bully than to violate them as a sneak? ...... The British were the first to perpetrate a breach of good faith. They taught the Ameers of Sindh that treaties were to be regarded, only so long as it was convenient to regard them. What wonder that these instructions 'returned to plague the inventor?'. . .

"The wolf in the fable did not show greater cleverness in the discovery of a pretext for devouring the lamb than the British Government has shown in all its dealings with the Ameers." *

In the *Autobiography of Lutfullah*, edited by E. B. Eastwick, F. R. S., F. S. A. (3rd edition, London, Smith, Elder and Co., 1858), it is stated that

"In January 1839, a new treaty was forced on the Amirs of Sind. Captain Eastwick read it to their Highnesses in Persian. "The Amirs listened composedly, though marks of displeasure could be traced on the face of Mir Nur Mahamed. He changed color, becoming now red, now pale as a ghost. When the reading was over, the Biluchis showed great excitement. At this time a slight signal from their Highnesses would have been sufficient to terminate the lives of all our party under the swords of the barbarian and remorseless Biluchis, many of whom stood at our head with naked scimitars, in the same way as the executioners do at the moment of the performance of their horrid duty. Mir Nur Mahamed first observed, in Biluchi, to his two colleagues, "Cursed be he who puts reliance upon the promises of the Feringees;" and then, addressing himself seriously to the British representative, he spoke thus in Persian: "Your treaties, I believe, are changeable at your pleasure and convenience; is this the way to treat your friends and benefactors? You asked our permission to allow your armies a free passage through our territories. We granted it without hesitation, depending upon your friendship under your honourable promises. Had we known that, after the entrance of your army into our lands, you would threaten our safety, and enforce another treaty upon us, demanding an annual tribute of three hundred thousand rupees, and a ready payment of two million one hundred thousand rupees for the immediate expenses of the army, we would, in such case, have adopted measures for the security of our country and persons. You know we are Biluchis, and no traders to be frightened easily. We do not govern the country alone, but the interest of the whole of our clan is involved in the government." Captain Eastwick said, "Necessity has no law;" "Friends must aid friends in emergencies." Mir Nur Mahamed smiled, and then with a sigh, he said to Captain Eastwick, "I wish I could comprehend the meaning of the word 'friend' which you use," †

But it was reserved for Ellenborough to annex Sindh, violating all the recognised laws of nations. The reasons which marked out Sindh as the victim of the English may be summed up as follows:

1st. The Amirs of Sindh were reputed to be very wealthy and their treasuries overflowing with gold, silver, and other precious metals and stones, that is, what is called in the Bible "filthy lucre." The greedy Christians could not resist the temptation of possessing them and they knew they could be masters of all these good things of the world very easily and without much bloodshed. Writes Sir Charles Dilke in his *Greater Britain*:

"It is in India, when listening to a mess-table conversation on the subject of looting that we begin to remember our descent from Scandinavian sea-king robbers. Centuries of education have not

* *The Calcutta Review*, Vol. I, pp. 220—225
† Pp. 277, 278, 279.

purified the blood; our men in India can hardly set eyes on a native prince or a Hindoo palace before they cry, 'What a place to break up!' 'What a fellow to loot'!"

2nd. The possession of Sindh would help the English in their military operations on the North-Western frontier, as their troops could be easily transported by the river Indus. This would also be beneficial to their trade and commerce in that region. Writing to the Duke of Wellington from Allahabad on June 7, 1842, Ellenborough said:

"Such I wish to make our position on our North-Western frontier. I have written for more information than I have as to the island of Bukkur and the town of Sukkur. That town of Sukkur must be our *tete-du-pont* upon the right bank of the Indus and the island a citadel. I have asked the Court to send me six more steamers for the Indus. I have ordered round to the Indus the two in the Euphrates, and there are now, I think, two, if not three, with from seven to ten iron steamers. I can command the river from its mouth to Ferozepur. *I do not intend to give up Kurachee.* Thus I shall be able to throw troops from Bombay upon the right bank of the Indus, and Kurachee being our port, I hope the day will come when our iron steamers from that place will take officers arriving from Aden and Suez up at once to the Sutlej."

3rd. In Indian politics, the English, whenever they wished to swallow up any principality or deprive any people of their independence, had their bogey to start with, that is, they feared Russian or French intrigue in India. With the battle of Waterloo, one should have thought that no one in his senses would have believed that the French any more contemplated establishing an empire in India. Yet the Duke of Wellington, who seems to have adviced Ellenborough to annex Sindh, gave as the principal reason for such a step that the French might be intriguing at the mouth of the Indus! For to Ellenborough he wrote on February 4, 1843:

"I am very anxious about the mouth of the Indus. I don't like and I am very jealous of the proceedings of the French Government in all parts of the world. If their object was to promote their own objects and the commercial and the political interests of France, I should not so much mind them, notwithstanding that even these objects require and deserve our attention. But what I see of them is everywhere, in every spot in which a French agent could be introduced or even a subject of France, if only in the shape of a missionary, to intrigue, and excite the community against the interests and influence of the British Government. * * *

"There is no part of the East in which they could intrigue with more advantage, and occasion more excitement against the British Government, than among the tribes on the Lower Indus, and between the mouth of the Indus and the Persian Gulf. You may rely upon it that you will ere long have a French frigate in that quarter, whose operations, it will be the duty of the admiral to observe afloat, while your agents in Sinde, Beluchistan, Kelat, etc., will observe them in shore."

The arguments on which the Iron Duke based the above premises are ludicrous, to say the least. For he wrote:

"The French Government have always had connections with the Sikhs. An Italian officer who was heretofore in the service of Buonaparte, and has since been in the service of Runjeet Singh, but had returned to Europe, has within the last three months taken leave of Louis Phillipe previous to his return to Lahore.

"His course should be observed. The religion, the social state, and the politics of the Sikhs render them by far the most appropriate allies for the French of any in that part of Asia, and if once they could establish themselves on the Indus, you would have them allied with the Sikhs, their officers in the Sikh army, the politics of Lahore under their direction."

In the above also was thrown out not a gentle but a broad hint for depriving the Sikhs of their independence.

The Iron Duke was dishonest in all that he wrote in the letter to Ellenborough, extracts from which have been given above. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, that military genius and ambitious prince whom the English styled the Lion of the Panjab, was now dead, and in his life-time he was prevented from gaining a footing in any part of Sindh. So to talk of the Sikhs intriguing with the French at the mouth of the Indus was not true.

The Duke of Wellington also gave strategical reasons for the occupation of Sindh. In his letter of March 30, 1842, he wrote to Ellenborough:

"Hydarabad ought to be maintained, and such other parts in Scinde, particularly on the left bank of the Indus, as will tend to secure that possession. The Government of Bombay ought, besides, at all times, to have gun boats and others propelled by steam in that river, so as to command its navigation and to prevent the passage of freebooters from the right to the left bank. The security of Scinde, which will be promoted by the possession of the passage by the island of Bukkur, will tend to give further security to the left flank of the army on the Sutlej, which might be considered to be in a position not to be attacked by any force which could be brought against it from Central Asia."

4th. One of the reasons for war with the Amirs of Sindh and annexing that province was the defeats which the British had sustained in Afghanistan and the disasters that had befallen them in that country. To quote Kaye:

"But the real cause of this chastisement of the Ameers consisted in the chastisement which the British had received from the Afghans. It was deemed expedient at this stage of the great political journey, to show that the British could beat some one, and so it was determined to beat the Ameers of Sindh. It is true that two victorious armies had marched upon Cabool through the Eastern and Western countries of Afghanistan and carried everything before them, but it was deemed expedient immediately to withdraw those armies and the scurrying home through the passes might look, or by many be conceived to look, like a virtual acknowledgment of inability to occupy the country, and therefore, in some measure, an acknowledgment of defeat. To remedy this evil it was determined to show that the British army could hold Sindh. A few more victories were required to re-establish our reputation and the Governor-General resolved, that the Ameers, who a few months before had spared our army when they might have annihilated it, should be the victims of this generous policy."*

Wellington concluded his letter of March 30, 1842, the letter in which his advice that "Hydarabad ought to be maintained," etc.—has already been quoted above. by saying:

"And I earnestly recommend to you to adopt measures which will give to your Government the advantage of appearing to be and of being in readiness to maintain the British Government and power in India. These, with the other measures recommended in this letter, will all tend to the same object, that of relieving your government from the consequences of the impression produced by the recent disasters north of the Indus.

"Your position is an unfortunate one, and it is painful to consider of it. But I think that I have suggested to you the measures best calculated to restore our strength, to secure our position, to acquire the confidence of our subjects, our dependents, and our allies, and particularly of our

* *The Calcutta Review*, Vol. I, p. 237.

army, by the re-establishment of its discipline and subordination, the restoration of its military spirit and confidence.

"If you should succeed in these measures, you will save the British nation from the ruin and disgrace of the loss of this great empire, and you will acquire throughout the world the reputation and respect which you deserve.

"It is impossible to impress upon you too strongly the notion of the importance of the restoration of our reputation in the East. Our enemies—in France, the United States, and wherever found—are now rejoicing in triumph upon our disasters and degradation. You will teach them that their triumph is premature.

Reading the whole of the above letter of the Iron Duke between the lines, it is evident that he wanted Ellenborough to make war on somebody to show to the world that the British troops had not been cowed down by their disasters in Afghanistan. It is also clear that he threw out a broad hint that Sindh should be attacked, because it would succumb very easily to the British arms.

5th. Perhaps the most important consideration which led Ellenborough to annex Sindh was that its rulers were Musalmans. His Christian lordship's expressed antipathy and hatred towards the followers of Islam has already been mentioned before. To weaken the power of the votaries of Islam, to make them feel their inferiority to the Christians, was the avowed policy of the authorities. It was, therefore, that it was considered expedient to annex Sindh and make the Amirs prisoners and pensioners of the East India Company.

But some pretext or pretexts were needed to swallow up the principality of Sindh. It was soon discovered that the Amirs violated treaties, and that they entertained hostile intentions against the English! For these alleged faults, they were deprived of their principality and sent into captivity; the inmates of their harems insulted, assaulted and brutally robbed of their ornaments; and their hoarded treasures plundered.

That the pretexts were false, no one knew better than Ellenborough himself. Writing to the Iron Duke from Agra on March 22, 1843, he said:

"I hardly know how I could have accomplished the object of retaining possession of a commanding position upon the Lower Indus without a breach with the Amirs. We could hardly have justified our remaining at Kurachee; we could not have justified our remaining at Bukkur, after the termination of the war in Afghanistan, without a new treaty. What had occurred was sufficient to show that upon our retiring from the Indus, the existing treaty for the free navigation of that river would have been violated in every particular......

"It was really impossible for me to form a decided opinion as to the authenticity of Persian letters—that could be much better decided on the spot; and being satisfied that, if the letters were genuine, we were justified in requiring new terms, and that policy required us to avail ourselves of the opportunity of coming to a new settlement if we were justified in doing so, I left the matter in Sir Charles Napier's hands."

After the above blunt and brusque confession of Ellenborough, it is needless to inquire into the alleged violation of treaties on the part of the Amirs, or of their treasonable correspondence with the King of Persia, or the hostile intentions against the British which have been attributed to them. The alleged misdemeanours and violation of treaties of the Amirs were thoroughly exposed in the controversy regarding

Sindh which took place in England, both in the Parliament and the press of that country, as pure fabrications. The reader interested in the subject is recommended to peruse the following publications named in the footnote* to convince him of the utter falsity of the pretexts which, according to the Christian jingoes, justified the war on the Amirs of Sind.

Wrote Kaye in the first volume of the *Calcutta Review* (p. 219) regarding the violation of treaties by the Amirs:

"It would seem as though the British Government claimed to itself the exclusive right of breaking through engagements. If the violation of existing covenants ever involved *ipso facto* a loss of territory, the British Government in the East would not now possess a rood of land between the Burhampooter and the Indus."

The chosen instrument for the spoliation of Sindh was one Sir Charles Napier, who, like Ellenborough, was a protege of the Iron Duke. Why, of all mortals. Napier was chosen, is a puzzle difficult to solve. This man was known to possess a very violent temper, to be of insubordinate disposition and very quarrelsome. Yet this was the man regarding whom Ellenborough wrote to Wellington on 17th November, 1842 ;

"I am quite charmed with Sir Charles Napier."

Napier was chosen because he was ready to execute the dirty job with which he was entrusted.

It should be remembered that Napier was sent to Sindh to supersede Major Outram, who had been the British Envoy in the Court of the Amirs during the period of the Afghan War. He rendered important services to his Government during that critical period—services which were pronounced by Mountstuart Elphinstone to have been such as "it would be difficult to parallel in the whole course of Indian diplomacy."

There must have been some strong reasons which led to his supersession by Napier. Official documents do not throw any light on this point. But we suspect that the character which Outram was credited with possessing as being a straight-forward and honest man, and not an occidental diplomatist, made Ellenborough shrink from communicating to him the nature of the dirty work which he had in contemplation. As he could not reasonably expect Outram to be a tool of his Machiavellian policy, Ellenborough was compelled to supersede him. Napier was in the confidence of Ellenborough. The precise nature of his instructions with which the Governor-General used to favour him is not known, because the correspondence between them was not of a public but of a private character. His Lordship writing to Wellington on March 22, 1843, said :

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* 1. Correspondence relative to Sindh 1838-1843. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of her Majesty, London, 1843.

2. Correspondence relative to Sindh [Supplementary to above] 1844.
3. Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, vol. 72. No. 3. London. 1844.
4. The Conquest of Sindh, a Commentary, Parts I and II, by Lieut. Col. J. Outram, C. B. 1846.
5. Eastwick's Dry Leaves from Young Egypt.
6. The *Calcutta Review*, vol. VI. The Sindh Controversy, Napier and Outram.

"My correspondence with Sir C. Napier having been more of a private than of a public character, although all made official, I may have been less careful in the choice of expressions than I should have been had I written in the name of the Secretary."

It is not improbable that only such of the correspondence was made official as suited the convenience of the Government of the day.

From all that we have said, it is perhaps not unreasonable to infer that Ellenborough instructed Napier to provoke the Amirs to hostilities. That perhaps accounts for the attitude he assumed towards them and the studied manner in which he ill-treated and ill-used them.

Napier and his Christian colleagues and underlings indulged in all sorts of intrigues and conspiracies to subvert the authority of the Amirs and achieve their vile end. They succeeded in raising a traitor in the camp of the Amirs in the person of Ali Murad, the Amir of Khairpur and a near relation of the other Amirs of Sindh.

It would be too long and tedious to narrate all the political and military transactions of Napier which were admirably calculated to provoke hostilities. And in the end, they succeeded. The Moslem Amirs were compelled to fight the Christians for their very existence. But they were no match for Napier in all those arts which go under the designation of occidental diplomacy. There were traitors in their camp who were in the pay of the British. So it was not difficult for Napier to be triumphant in the battle of Miani fought with the Amirs on the 17th February, 1843. It is recorded by Sir Richard Burton that

"Neither of our authorities tell us, nor can we expect a public document to do so, how the mulatto who had charge of the Amirs' guns had been persuaded to fire high, and how the Talpoor traitor who commanded the cavalry, openly drew off his men and showed the shameless example of flight. When the day shall come to publish details concerning disbursement of 'secret service money in India,' the public will learn strange things. Meanwhile those of us who have lived long enough to see how history is written, can regard it as but little better than a poor romance."*

After the battle the victorious European soldiers behaved in a manner of which any human being ought to feel ashamed. The privacy of the Zenana was violated and the inmates of the Amir's harems were cruelly treated and robbed of their valuable ornaments. A French writer has recorded:

"The officers of General Napier invaded even the harems of these unfortunate princesses and carried off the treasures, jewels and even the clothes of their women."†

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* *Life of Sir Richard Burton* by Lady Burton. London, Champan and Hall, Ld. 1893. p. 141.

† *History of the Afgans,* by J. P. Ferrier, translated by Captain Jesse, London. John Murray (1858 : p. 287.)

A writer signing himself as "a traveller" wrote in the *Tribune* of Lahore in September, 1893, a letter on "the Conquest of Sind." from which the following extracts are made :

"A story I heard from Captain S—referred to the cruelties practised on the inmates of the Amir's Zenana after Napier's victory. Wives of Sergeants and other European soldiers were sent into the Zenana, and these Christian women delighted in most brutally tearing away rings from the noses and ears of the Zenana ladies. The harem ladies were not only plundered of their ornaments they had on their person, but their noses and ears were horribly mutilated. Of course, in histories written by Englishmen, to glorify the deeds of their countrymen, these things are never mentioned, but these barbarities throw those of the Native Sepoys during the Mutiny into the shade. Whatever

Sindh was annexed to the British dominions and Sir Charles Napier was amply rewarded for what he himself described as "a very advantageous, useful, humane piece of *rascality*," for, as he said, "we have no right to seize Scinde, yet we shall do so."*

Of course, the Christian philanthropists of England affected to be shocked at the inhuman manner in which the Moslem Amirs were treated by their co-religionists and compatriots in India. They shed very copiously crocodile tears over the fate of the fallen Amirs. But perhaps they were all secretly glad that Sindh had become a part of the British dominions, because it added to the 'dominion over which the sun never sets, where their "boys" would be provided for and which would be a market for the goods manufactured by the nation of shopkeepers.

Another important consideration for the annexation of Sindh was that it grew fine cotton—a fact which the Britishers in India had found out even so long ago.

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the native sepoys did, they did in the excitement of the hour. Whereas on the helpless, innocent Zenana inmates of the Amir, the cruelties were perpetrated in cold blood by Christian folks when all the excitement of the battle was over. There are many an unwritten chapter in the history of India for the last 250 years. If all the feats of strategists and diplomatists be brought to light, what a curious story they would tell of the mightiness and strength of the conquerors' sword.

"Captain S—served in India during the Mutiny. He is a linguist and a traveller known throughout the scientific world. His father was a military officer who took part in the Sind Campaign. So his authority there will be very few to challenge.

"The conquest of Sind is not very old. There are men living in whose memory the events of that memorable conquest are still fresh. It is a pity that our educated countrymen do not try to collect the historical materials they have still within their reach, In my sojourn through Sind, nothing struck me so much as the wandering minstrels and their ballads. Some of these men are very old. I met one who was bordering upon eighty. These ballads are chiefly historical, and are principally composed in Baluchi. I suggest to the educated youth of Sind to collect the ballads, as they will throw a flood of light on the past history of their province."

In his "Dry Leaves from Young Egypt," Eastwick has given a detailed account of the manner in which the Zenana ladies of the Amirs weretreated by Christian British officers.

* At p. 323 of *Lights and Shadows of Military Life*, edited by Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Sindh wrote:

"Our object in conquering India, the object of all our cruelties, was money. More than a thousand millions sterling are said to have been squeezed out of India in the last sixty years. Every shilling of this has been picked out of blood, wiped and put into the murderers' pockets: but wipe and wash the money as you will, the damned spot will not out."

But then the gallant writer did not anticipate the cruelties he had to inflict on the helpless inmates of the Amirs' harem in the "Christian" conquest of Sindh.

Sir Charles Napier was greatly proud of his being born a Christian. In his proclamation of the 6th August, 1844, as Governor of Sindh, he said:

"Be it known to all the Mahomedan inhabitants of Scinde, that I am the conqueror of Scinde, but I do not intend to interfere with your religion. I respect your religion, but it is necessary that you should also respect mine. We both worship *one* God," &c.

In the truly "Christian" spirit, Sir Charles Napier wrote to the fallen non-Christian Amirs on March 18, 1843:

"You must recollect that your intrigues with Meer Sher Mahomed give me a great deal to do. I am also much surprised by the falsehoods which you tell . . . . . . if you give me any more trouble . . . . I will cast you in prison as you deserve. You are prisoners and though I will not kill you, . . . I will put you in irons on board a ship. You must learn, Princes, that if prisoners conspire against those who have conquered them, they will find themselves in danger." P. 49. Supplementary Sind Parliamentary Papers, 1844.

Amir Rustam Khan of Sindh

Lieutenant General Sir Charles Napier

Amir Nasir Khan of Sindh and sons

CHAPTER LXXIV

ELLENBOROUGH'S TREATMENT OF THE SINDHIA

Sindh and Sindhia have no affinity with each other, although the names sound alike. But Ellenborough tried to treat both of them alike. The territory ruled by the house of Sindhia was always eagerly coveted by the British rulers of India. That principality was the richest and strongest of all the Mahratta States which went to form the Mahratta Confederacy. Under the guiding influence of its celebrated chief Mahadji, it had acquired almost the supreme power in India, for that chief held the Mughal Emperor of Delhi his captive. The most sanguinary battles fought by the English on the Indian soil in the early part of the nineteenth century were with the army of Mahadji's successor, Dowlat Rao Sindhia. Again, it was to coerce that chief that Marquess Hastings ostensibly undertook the war against the Pindaris.

How Lord Bentinck intrigued to annex the State of Sindhia, in order to connect Agra with Bombay has already been mentioned before. An intrigue of the same nature with a similar object in view was again indulged in by Ellenborough.

It should be remembered that the ruler of the State of Sindhia was not till 1843, like other native princes of India, a mere feudatory of the East India Company. He was considered to be a more or less independent sovereign. Thus in the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1832 (on Political or Foreign), it was stated :

"Within the Peninsula, *Scindia* is the only Prince who preserves the semblance of independence." (P. iv.)

Before that Committee on the 16th February, 1832, the historian, James Mill, said, regarding Sindhia, that

"He neither at present has subsidiary alliance with us, nor do we include him among the protected states ; in that respect he stands alone ; . . . ."

Before the same Committee on the 27th February, 1832, Major Close in reply to the question,

"What is the relation in which Scindia stood to the Company ?"—said :—"He was independent."

Then he was asked, "Has he no treaty with the Company ?"—"Yes, there are sevaral treaties, but they are not such as to abrogate his independence, or to place him in acknowledged submission to the British Government."

This fact is important to remember, because it shows that the Government of India had no right to interfere in the internal affairs of that State.

Unfortunately for that State, a few months after the arrival of Ellenborough in India as its Governor-General, its ruler Jankoji Sindhia breathed his last on the 7th February, 1843, and all of a sudden. About that time the Machiavellian policy of that Governor-General in Sindh was bearing its desired fruit, for that province was shortly

after annexed to the British dominions. Ellenborough determined to follow the same policy and with the same object in veiw with the House of Sindhia.

Jankoji died childless and had made no arrangement for the succession. Here was an opportunity for the lynx-eyed British to seize and turn it to their advantage. Jankoji's widow was a girl of only eleven. So, the duty of selecting a successor to Jankoji fell on the Gwalior Darbar. The chiefs of that State elected a near relation of their departed sovereign in the person of a boy of eight years named Bhagirath Rao as the successor. This boy on being adopted assumed the name of Jiajirao Sindhia. The widow of Jankoji, although appointed regent, being herself a minor, the real power of governing the State fell into the hands of the Darbar. If government in the Western countries is a success, because it is vested in the representative Assemblies or Parliaments, it was no less so in those native States of India which were governed by Darbars. And the Gwalior Darbar was governing and would have governed the State well, had it not been interfered with by the Government of India.

Ellenborough cherished ulterior designs on this State. So from his camp at Delhi, he wrote to Queen Victoria on 19th February, 1843, that

"having received intelligence on the 9th instant of the death of the Maharajah of Gwalior, he immediately determined on proceeding to Agra, instead of Meerut, in order to be near Gwalior, where the Maharajah having died without heirs and the widow to whom the right of adopting a son belongs being only eleven, it could not but be a subject of anxiety in what manner the government would be carried on, and the necessity might possibly arise for instant intervention.

"Hitherto everything has been condncted at Gwalior peaceably and properly. The boy, about eight years old, nearest in blood to the late Maharaja, has been adopted, with the consent of the chiefs and army, and every deference which could be justly expected has been evinced towards the British Government."

There was nothing then to complain of against the conduct of the Gwalior Darbar. Why did the Governor-General write then that "the necessity might possibly arise for instant intervention ?" His words indicated more than what appeared on the surface. This is evident from what follows in the letter above referred to. Ellenborough continued :

"Still the necessity exists for appointing a regency, and for some time there must be a difficulty in carrying on any new administration. Lord Ellenborough, therefore, adheres to his intention of proceeding to Agra, and has made some change in the disposition of the regiments in order to have with him old corps upon which he can entirely depend . . ." *

Accordingly, Ellenborough proceeded to Agra and commenced his campiagn of intrigues against the Gwalior State. John Hope, in his sketch of the House of Sindhia, writes:

"As Ellenborough had firmly resolved, though his resolution was not then made known, first to disregard the rights of this state, and afterwards deprive it of its independence, the preliminary step would necessarily be to set aside the Maharanee on the ground of her infancy, and to put up in her place as Regent a person who would cheerfully do the bidding of the British Government. The election was in the hands of the Durbar. Now there was only one individual in that council who would lend himself to carry out an anti-national policy, and he was called the Mamasahib.

* To the Duke of Wellington he wrote at the same time:
"I decided on going to Gwalior instead of Meerut as soon as I heard of the Maharaja's death;

Accordingly the Resident laid aside the principle of non-intervention which hitherto had guided his conduct, and strained every nerve to effect this man's election." *

Hope in his work has given a graphic sketch of the nature and character of this Mama Sahib, who was an upstart and whose manners were repulsive. Yet Ellenborough did not scruple to write to Her Majesty the Queen Victoria in his letter dated Agra, 21st March, 1843, the following lie:

"The movement of Lord Ellenborough to Agra immediately on his receiving the news of the death of Sindhia has apparently had the desired effect of establishing without contest a strong government at Gwalior in the person of Mama Sahib, who feels that the support which has been given to him by the British representative has practically given to him the regency."

Hope writes:

"The opposition candidate who, if there had been no interference, would have been elected by acclamation was the Dada Khasjeewalla. Just at this critical time arrived a letter from his Lordship which conveyed these words: *'The Governor-General would gladly see the Regency conferred upon the Mama Sahib'.*"

So the Mama Sahib was "elected" the Regent of Gwalior. But he did not command the respect of anybody in that State. Yet his Lordship had the audacity to write to Her Majesty on April 20, 1843, that—

"The administration of the new regent at Gwalior has been carried on with tranquillity."

But this creature of the Governor-General did not long enjoy the sweets of office or the favor of that British autocrat. He had to leave Gwalior. Ellenborough in his letter of 8th June, 1843, informed the Queen:

"Until the 20th of May everything at Gwalior wore a favourable appearance, and the authority of the regent never appeared to have a stronger foundation than the day before the intrigue commenced, which has ended in his downfall. The regent had effected a marriage between his niece (a child of six years of age) and the Maharajah, who is nine. The marriage seemed to have been agreeable to the widow of the late Maharajah, the Maharanee—who is herself only twelve—but probably it was represented to her Highness that the regent, having managed this marriage, would, in the name of the minor Maharajah, supersede her authority in the State. Whatever the cause, her Highness gave her whole support to the faction hostile to the regent and advanced sums for the payment of the troops from the Treasury. After discussions which lasted a fortnight, the regent was dismissed, all the chiefs having been brought over to the faction hostile to him.

"The British Minister at Gwalior has advised the regent to retire from that place in obedience to the Maharanee's orders.

"These events are very much to be deplored. They may have very injurious results upon the tranquility of the common frontier of the British territory and that of the Gwalior State. Lord Ellenborough still hopes, however, that no outrage will occur which will render necessary the bringing together of troops for the vindication of the honour of the British Government."

Let us turn to Hope for what he has to say regarding the ejection of Mama Sahib from Gwalior. He writes:

"There happened to be, at this time, a little disturbance in a distant part of the country between

and I adhere to my purpose, although I do not now apprehend that there will be any difficulty about putting things into order there. The circumstance of my being so near will steady any new government of which I may approve."

* P 4?

a party of villagers and some sepoys, and the Resident called on the Mama to cause the apprehension of the native officer who was in command of the men ; but, unluckily, power to act was just the one thing which the Regent most wanted. He was helpless, and the temper of the Resident was chafed. What was, then, to be done? The latter addressed himself to Lord Ellenborough and suggested the calling in of British troops from Agra. The answer seemed to make 'confusion worse confounded.' 'I intrust the use of troops to the discretion of no one except my own.' The pear was clearly not ripe, and nothing was done.

"And now another and an awkward embarrassment appeared, which seemed to set the very teeth of the Regent, as if he were in perfect terror. A slave girl whose name was Narungee, who had never been permitted to go outside the walls of the Zenana, had erected, it was gravely said, the standard of revolt in the palace . . . . We, then residing on the spot, could never believe that she was anything better than the ordinary slaves ; but if we are to give credence to the affrighted Mama, she must have been a Gorgon in disguise . . . . for she deposed the nominee of the great Autocrat of India, packing him out of the country with all his baggage, without even the common Asiatic ceremony of the beat of a tom-tom. . . . .

"We confess, indeed, that we are inclined to regard the ejection of the Mama Sahib as a very great blunder, as *it gave a fresh motive to Lord Ellenborough to mature some other scheme*, which . . . . proved 'far more certain to cause the collapse of the independence of this State than the worst acts of a wretched imbecile could possibly bring about. We believe, in fact, that if Lord Ellenborough did not actually rejoice over the expulsion of his nominee, ... still perceiving that from him nothing great could be derived, the only umbrage which he felt, perhaps, was the apparent contempt done to his dignity, which the overthrow of his favourite would seem to display."*

The vacancy caused by the flight of the Mama Sahib was to be filled. The Darbar proceeded to elect its chief and the choice unanimously fell on the Dada Khasjeewalla. But this man was not invested by the Governor-General with the powers of the Regent which the Mama Sahib possessed. Writes Hope :

"It was on the 24th of May, 1843, that the Mama took flight ; and on the 26th, the Maharanee, who now occupied the throne as Regent, ordered the Durbar to assemble to elect a Minister. This national council made choice at once of the Dada Khasjeewalla. Vacillation of purpose was one of the remarkable traits in the character of the Governor-General, and an instance of it was to be given now. He who had refused to recognise the Maharanee in February on account of her tender years, hesitated not to acknowledge her as Regent in May ; but no power under heaven would have prevailed on him to countenance as Minister, the iil-fated chamberlian. A wit once said, that "Women's faults are two—Nothing's right they say, nothing right they do.' It was so with this man. The same number of faults, though in their character different, had all the native Chiefs in India, whenever their respective territories chanced to be coveted. They had, it was alleged, in stereotyped letter-press, a weak system of government on the frontier, and a strong system of government in the interior...

"It is a matter," writes the Govenor-General, "of paramount importance that there should exist in Gwalior a government willing and able to preserve tranquillity along that extended line (meaning the frontier), for the British Government cannot permit the growing up of a lax system of rule, generating habits of plunder along its frontier.' When this is written in despatches, the evidence of approaching danger is strong and undissembled ; but what will the reader think when we tell him that the province of Bundelkhand, which was under our control, and the two rich provinces of Saugor and Nerbudda, which were absolutely British territory (the frontiers of which bordered on the frontiers of Scindea's dominions), were at this time, and had been for two years, in a state of open insurrection, and that on the very day that this threatening despatch was penned by Lord

* Pp. 46-49.

Ellenborough, Scindia's contingent of 2,000 men were keeping our rebels from destroying the wealthy town of Khimlassa, which was distant 100 miles from the Gwalior Capital, and which belonged to the British Government, whilst the most active and able officer of the Maharanee's army, Colonel Salvadore, with his men, was saving from destruction Balabehut, another town of ours, which the rebels were about to fire."*

The next act n this Gwalior drama was the removal of the Resident from that State by the Governor-General. Colonel Spiers, who was the Resident at this time at Gwalior, was perhaps not a man after Ellenborough's heart. So the Governor-General adopted diplomacy, certainly not oriental, but occidental, in removing him from Gwalior. Writing to the Queen on June 27,1843, he said:

"The retirement of the late regent from Gwalior has removed all present apprehensions of collision with the troops of Gwalior. The British Resident has, in pursuance of his instructions, removed to his house at Dholepore, about thirty miles from Gwalior, and out of the Gwalior territory.

"The last accounts give reason to expect that the attempts by the successful faction to remove from the palace the brigade which has for some years guarded it may lead to a contest.

"Under all circumstances the most proper position for the British Resident seems to be that which has been taken at Dholepore, whence he will not return to Gwalior without specific instructions; and Lord Ellenborough's present impression is that the Resident should not return until there shall be a government at Gwalior possessing the appearance of good intention and stability, or until the Maharanee and the Chiefs shall earnestly desire his aid for the establishment of such a government."

Of course, according to the law of nations, the removal of an Envoy from a foreign Court means declaration of hostilities. So Ellenborough meant mischief when he took the above step. But his hypocrisy, duplicity and want of veracity regarding the removal of Colonel Spiers from Gwalior, are well exposed by Hope:

"We are now in the height of the rainy season, and it was necessary at once, if ever, that matters should be 'coming up . . . on the top of a floodtide.' The Governor-General thus addressed the Resident :—"The great heat usually leads you at this season to absent yourself from Gwalior and I see no sufficient reason for your now departing from your usual course.' The idea was not bad in itself, if such a very small game was worthy of a great Governor-General to play; but the fact was just the other way.....The Resident felt that he *must* acquiesce,......He accordingly told the Durbar a little fib, and this was that he required 'change of air.'..... Nothing had then transpired to lead him to apprehend a storm; nothing to show very clearly duplicity; nothing to raise the fear of another 'humane bit of rescality."†

Ellenborough was bent upon mischief. Colonel Spiers was not going to be a pliant tool in his hands. So he was removed. His successor was Colonel Sleeman, best known for the influence he had over Thugs and Dacoits.§

But Sleeman was specially selected by Ellenborough, because his Lordship thought

* Pp. 50-52.

† Pp. 54-56.

§ In his "Story of My Life," the celebrated novelist Captain Meadows Taylor writes :—"Had I been allowed to remain (in the civil employ), I should have been the first to disclose the horrible crime of Thuggee to the world; but it fell to the good fortune of Major Sleeman to do so afterwards."

Colonel Sleeman appears to have been a favoured child of fortune.

that officer would be a willing instrument in his hands in helping him in the absorption of the principality of Gwalior. Sleeman possessed the reputation of being a philanthropist. But Johnson might have as well said that the last refuge of scoundrels is philanthropy instead of patriotism. Sleeman was a catcher of thugs and thieves. If the adage "set a thief to catch a thief" be true, then Sleeman illustrated the truth of that proverb in his own life. He played the same game at Gwalior which a few years later on he played at Lucknow. As his doings paved the way to the annexation of Oudh, so his doings at Gwalior were designed to bring about the same object. But in both cases it is a well-known fact that he did not advocate annexation.

From his known antipathy to the House of Sindhia, Sleeman should not have been chosen to fill the situation of Resident at Gwalior. In his "Rambles and Recollections" Sleeeman wrote:

"As a citizen of the world I could not help thinking that it would have been a great blessing upon a large portion of our species if an earthquake were to swallow up this Court of Gwalior and the army that surrounds it."

With his bias against the principality of Gwalior Sleeman was considered by Ellenborough a very 'safe' man for the Residency at Gwalior.

The new Minister, Dada Khasjiwala, was an able man. But because he was an able man, therefore he was an eye-sore to Ellenborough. It was an English minister, Sir John Gorst, who from his place in the House of Commons in 1891 said that able men like tall poppies were to be suppressed.

So then Dada Khasjiwala was marked out for his victim by Ellenborough. His Lordship wrote to the Queen on August, 13, 1843:

"At Gwalior, the chief of the successful faction which lately expelled the regent, whose appointment had been sanctioned by the British Government, has apparently strengthened himself by paying the arrears of pay due to the troops, and by compelling the retirement, not unattended by violence on the part of the soldiers, of almost all the European and half-blood officers, in the service of the State. He has replaced, in situations from which they had been removed by the late Maharajah, on the representation of the British Resident, many persons notorious for their hostility to British interests, and for their connection with plunderers upon our frontier. The example of a succesful defiance of the British Government at Gwalior has led the weak Holkar to pay less attention to our expressed wishes. Disturbances are expected on the borders of Berar, and it is hardly possible that the vicinity of the ungoverned districts belonging to the Gwalior State should not lead to much disposition to plunder along our frontier and that of our allies.

"The new minister at Gwalior appears to exercise a very strict control over the conduct and persons of the widow of the late Maharajah and of the present minor sovereign. He avows that the reports of Lord Ellenborough's approaching return to England and the certainty of the retirement (from ill-health) of Lieutenant Colonel Sutherland and of Mr. Clerk from the North-West Provinces, lead him to think that he shall have all his own way."

"Under these circumstances, the members of the Indian Government have unanimously decided upon the formation of an army at Agra (of about 12,000 men besides artillery), which will be commanded by Sir Hugh Gough; and other measures are in contemplation for the purpose of enabling the Government to concentrate a much larger force. ... ...

"Your Majesty will readily perceive that the continued existence of a hostile Government at Gwalior would be inconsistent with the continuance of our permanent influence in India, by which alone its peace is preserved,"

Ellenborough very unmistakeably struck the note of war against Sindhia's Government. In his letter to the Queen, dated Calcutta, September 19, 1843, he again referred to Dada Khasjiwala as follows:

"The Dada Khasjiwala, with whom every measure of an offensive or hostile character originated. still retains his influence over the Rani, and directs affairs. It would appear that he now conceals from her Highness the real purport of the communications addressed to her by the British minister.

"Upon the whole the state of India requires now, as indeed it always must, the exercise of extreme vigilance on the part of the Government, and constant preparation for the field."

The nature of the crime with which the Dada Khasjiwala was charged, has been explained by Hope as follows :

"It was said ... that the Minister of the state had intercepted a letter from his lordship to his dear young 'Sister' the Maharanee ... 'A high crime against the Maharanee, declared the Governor-General. The letter was written in the Persian language, and the Maharanee, a child of thirteen, could neither read nor write any language at all. There was only one man in the Capital who, by virtue of his hereditary office of 'Great Chamberlain and keeper of the crown jewels, could enter the most sacred of the female apartments, and that man was the Dada Khasjeewalla....... Who then, except this man, had the privilege to open and read the Governor-General's letter ... ? To suppose that this man, the favorite of 'the palace, cared to keep in ignorance a child, not out of the nursery, of the contents of a letter, albeit they conveyed censures upon himself, is in the last degree Quioxotic. The only thing that can be said to explain the whole affair is *delenda est Carthago'* ; and, that being so, that this charge, contemptible as we regard it, would do as well as any other."*

Lord Ellenborough had no right to interfere with the internal administration of the State. Yet he treated the existing treaties with Gwalior as so much waste paper, when he demanded to make over to him the Gwalior minister for punishment. In vain the Darbar asked the Governor-General to reconsider his demand, for it struck at the very honour of the Raj, and they went so far as to place him in confinement and appoint in his place one Ram Rao Phalkea, who had fought for the English by the side of Lake. But this did not appease the wrath of Ellenborough, who assembled one army on the north and another on the east frontier of Sindhia's dominions foi the purpose of invasion, if that minister were not delivered to him. The Gwalior Darbar had to bow down to this show of force and give up the Minister, who was banished for life and died ten years afterwards in Benares.

Ellenborough's expressed desire was acceded to. But still he was not satisfied. He wanted to go to war with the State of Gwalior and have it annexed to the British dominions. He wrote to the Queen from Barrackpur, Nov. 20, 1843 :

"At Gwalior the usurping minister has been seized by the chiefs and troops of the party opposed to him ; but there is still no appearance of a settlement without authoritative intervention of the British Government, and seeing the urgent necessity of effecting such settlement in a secure and satisfactory manner, Lord Ellenborough will proceed on the 25th instant to Agra, which he will reach on the 11th of December, and find the army assembled."

The mere seizure of the person of the minister did not satisfy his Lordship, who wanted to get the minister banished altogether from the State. He wrote to the Queen from camp Dholpur on December 19, 1843 :

* Pp. 58-59.

"The hostile minister, the Dada Khasjeewalla, was immediately delivered up upon the receipt by the Maharanee of the letter of which a copy is enclosed for your Majesty's perusal. He is a prisoner in the camp, and will be sent to the Fort at Agra."

Ellenborough misrepresented matters when he wrote that "the Dada Khasjiwala was immediately delivered up." But as said above, this was not true.

But Ellenborough was still not satisfied. He wrote in his letter of 19th December, 1843, to the Queen:

"The only remaining difficulty is apparently that of effecting the disbandment and disarming of a disaffected portion of the Gwalior army.

"In this measure the Chiefs would gladly co-operate; but they may not be able to effect it without our active aid, or at least without the support they would derive from the near approach of our army. . . .

"The existence of an army of such strength in that position must very seriously embarrass the disposition of troops we might be desirous of making to meet a coming danger from the Sutlej."

Here the British lord let the cat out of the bag. He wanted to take the Panjab and as he had written to the Duke of Wellington in his letter dated Agra, April 22, 1843:

"Depend upon it, I will never, if I can possibly avoid it, have two things on my hands at a time."

So he decided to crush Gwalior first.

Hope says:

"The Dada having been given up, there was then an end of the *causus belli.* Nothing of the kind. 'I have found,' said his Lordship to the new Minister, Ram Rao Phalkea, who had been sent by the Durbar to Agra to wait on him, 'a clause in a treaty made with Dowlut Rao Scindea at Boorhanpoor, which obliges the British Government, if at any time Scindea should be unable to cope with his enemies, to afford him military assistance. It is true, indeed, that the clause carefully guards against the danger of a great military power forcing its unsolicited assistance on a very weak one by the insertion of the word *on the requisition of the Maharajah*; but it is impossible, on account of his tender years, for Gyajee Scindea to make the requisition, and, as I am the only judge of his necessities, I shall march my army to Gwalior.' . . . Ram Rao Phalkea was astounded and replied . . . 'as nothing whatever had been mooted on the Boorhanpoor treaty, he had brought with him no copy of it to refer to . . . and that the invasion of a friendly state on such a pretext was quite a strange anomaly in the conduct of the Honorable Company.' . . . But all his arguments, all protestations failed, as would those of a goose who with equal pertinacity declined the profered aid of a hungry fox."*

Ellenborough thus expressed his intentions in the letter to the Queen from which extracts have been given above:

"The late Maharajah of Gwalior had alloted certain revenues for the maintenance of a corps of about 1400 men, to be commanded by British officers, and constantly stationed in the Gwalior territory. This corps has done excellent service, and it is proposed to obtain from the Gwalior State the assignment of further revenues for the purpose of raising very considerably the amount of this useful force.

"It is proposed to procure the consent of the Gwalior State to the placing under British adminis-

* Pp. 66-67.

tration the district of which the revenues will be so assigned to the extent at least of giving to the British Government the power of nominating and removing persons in authority, and thus securing the real co-operation of all for the maintenance of order."

Ellenborough knew that he had no right to dictate terms to the Sindhia. He told a brazenfaced lie to Ram Rao Phalkea when he pretended that such a right existed under the Burhanpur treaty. Says Hope:

"Respecting the clause in the Boorhanpur treaty on which the Governor-General pretended to justify the invasion, it cannot be controverted that there was no such treaty in existence. That which had been made in 1804, containing a stipulation of the kind alleged, was signed to meet the difficulties arising from the inroads of the Pindarees, but abrogated the following year to serve our own interests. The whole thing was a barefaced sham, and was, as Mr. Thornton well described it, owing to 'the facility with which the surrender of the Dada had been yielded, under the influence of terror imposed by the march of the British force, that a change in the policy of the Governor-General was effected, and the determination arrived at to employ that *terror* as an instrument for obtaining ulterior objects,"*

So Ellenborough, without any *causus belli*, invaded the territory of Sindhia, for he crossed the frontier and marched his troops into the principality of Gwalior. The peace-loving people of this Hindu State could not believe that their hearths and homes would be invaded by the orders of the Christian Governor-General. They were therefore quite unprepared and so the Sindhia's frontier was crossed without any difficulty by Ellenborough. That eminently "Christian" judge of Her Majesty's High Court of Agra, Mr. William Edwards, in his "Reminiscences of a Bengal Civilian," writes, for he was with Ellenborough:

"We were thus enabled to cross the Chumbul without opposition, an operation which, had that river, with its precipitous banks, been defended, could not have been effected without heavy loss."

But when the people saw that the Governor-General was thirsting for their blood, they very hurriedly prepared for fighing the British troops. So the battles of Maharajpur and Punniar were the result.

Both these battles were fought on the same day. *i.e.*, 29th December, 1843. Of course, fortune favoured the British arms, for besides good luck they had been preparing for the battles since some time previously, and they had more troops and were well-versed in the Machiavellian arts of raising traitors in the camp of their enemy, and their resources were almost inexhaustible. But the English generals did not show much of military strategy in the battle of Maharajpur. The manner in which they had disposed of their troops would have resulted in a disaster but for certain circumstances which turned in their favor.†

Some of the atrocities perpetrated in these two battles by the British have been described by Hope, who writes

* Pp. 71-72

† Edwards narrated the fight in detail. See pages 66 *et seq* of his "Reminiscences of a Bengal Civilian."

See also Ellenborough's description in his letter to the Duke of Wellington, dated camp Gwalior, Jan. 21, 1844, in Lord Colchester's History of the Indian Administration of Lord Ellenborough, pp. 412 *et seq*.

"Some Mahratta sepoys, twenty or thirty in number, having discharged their last cartridge, were fleeing from the field, but, finding themselves surrounded by our troops, they rushed into a native's house, the family having fortunately abandoned it, and barricaded the doors. Some of our men set fire to the thatched roof and these miserable sepoys were burnt to ashes. As long as a month afterwards the walls of the house and the charred remains of the men could be seen by any traveller just as they had been left on the day of the battle—deliberately allowed to remain by an angry people with a view to cause a feeling of deeper hatred than ever against our race. At the intercession of an European officer, a personal friend of Ram Rao Phalkea, the minister, the walls were taken down, the remains removed, and the soil ploughed for cultivation, to prevent the spot from being visited as the place of martyrs."*

He also mentions an atrocious deed that happened at the battle at Punniar.

"A young Portuguese officer, as soon as his regiment had been dispersed, went up, on the field, to one of our brigade-majors, and presenting his sword, asked to have his life spared. The brigade-major, declined the sword; and expressed his willingness to do all he could, and desired him to keep close *to his side. Unhappily, the Major was on horseback, while the Portuguese was on foot.* A demon in the rear had kept his tigerish eyes on the poor fellow, and a chance occurring, he plunged a bayonet through his body, making an exclamation while doing so in language too frightful to repeat. It may be added that Scindea's contingent was, with exquisite taste, made to act against that state of whose salt the officers and men of that body had long partaken, some of the latter being of the same village and country from which Gyajee Scindea had recently come."†

And these were the men who were talking of humanity. Writes Hope:

"The day before a shot was fired, Lord Ellenborough issued a proclamation in the English language, intended, we presume, for the people of England, in which he explained his intentions. In it we find that his Lordship was much moved by sentiments of pity towards the Maharaja; by a determination to brook no hostility to the British Government by *individuals* at his Court; and by a desire to have—which is the old story when the appetite for a native State is particularly sharp—*a quiet frontier*......To maintain unimpaired the position we now hold is a duty, not to ourselves alone, but to *humanity*.....The adoption of new views of policy, weakness under the name of moderation, and pusillanimity under that of forbearance, would not avert from our own subjects, and from our own territories, the evils we let loose upon India, and the only result of false measures would be to remove the scene of a contest, altogether inevitable, from Gwalior to Allahabad, there to be carried on with diminished force, a disheartened army, and a disaffected people.........If a contest were altogether inevitable, why should it be at Allahabad? ......Well, we will unravel the mystery. It was all owing to a Napoleonic instinct! It was surmised, that the recent demise of Runjeet Singh would lead to struggles for the masterdom of the Punjab; that a proud army at Lahore might even venture to cross the Sutledge and try its mettle against British soldiers; and that it was just possible that we might have to fall back upon Allahabad. There we should find the Gwalior army ready to kick us nearer to Calcutta and it was clear that, under this marvellous change of fortune, our force would be 'diminished,' our army 'disheartened,' and the people 'disaffected.' So then, 'pity towards Gyajee Scindea'; the determination to brook no hostility by individuals at his Court, and the desire to have 'a quiet frontier' were what the lawyers call false colourings and pretences, the real motive being Napoleonic strategy, which taught Lord Ellenborough to destroy even an unoffending army rather than allow it to exist in his rear." §

After the easy victories gained at Maharajpur and Punniar, the principality of Gwalior lay at the feet of Ellenborough. He must have compared himself to Alexander

* Pp. 74-75
† (Pp. 75-76).
§ Pp. 69-71.

or Caesar, Napoleon or Wellington. He could have wiped out the existence of this principality.* But what was his motive for not doing so? Hope has tried to answer this question by saying:

"We are perfectly certain, though the fact does not admit of positive proof, that it was the fear of rousing once more the resentment of powerful individuals in Parliament that just turned the scale and no more in favor of Sindhia."

The annexation of Sindh was very unpopular and Lord Ellenborough was condemned by the Parliament and the press of England for it. So he was obliged to be moderate with Gwalior. Had Gwalior been annexed, a general rising of the native States would have been the probable result. This is hinted at by Ellenborough, for in his letter of 16th February, 1844, he wrote to the Queen:

"Lord Ellenborough has reason to think that the moderation evinced in the treatment of the Gwalior State after the recent victories has produced a favourable impression upon the minds of the native princes of India, and has conciliated them towards the British Government; while the victories will, for the present at least, have the effect of putting an end to all ideas of resistance to British power."

But a new treaty was forced upon Sindhia and the State of Gwalior was shorn of much of its importance. It lost its independence and became a feudatory of the British Government.

* Mr. Thornton, in his history of India, writes that "the issue of his Lordship's official papers appeared to have had no other purpose; but to give expression to a feeling of triumph, and to gratify a desire of treating the Gwalior State as a conquered country.…Judging from the language held on the subject, it seems to have been thought an act of extraordinary lenity that the State should have been suffered to exist at all!"

CHAPTER LXXV

ANNEXATION OF KYTHAL

Kythal was a Cis-Satlaj Sikh State which entered into treaty with the British Government in 1809.

The chiefs of the Cis-Satlaj States never dreamt when they entered into alliance with the British that their states would be annexed to the territory of the East India Company for want of heirs. For, according to the Hindu law, they knew they could always adopt heirs in the event of the failure of a progeny. This is exactly what the British interpreters of the Treaty would not admit. So when the Kythal Chief died, his State was annexed by Ellenborongh. But this annexation was expressed by the euphemistic phrase "lapse." The State had not been originally granted to the Kythal Chief by the British that it could have "lapsed" to them.

However, it was not without some difficulty that Kythal State was acquired by the British. Ellenborough in his letter, dated Agra, April 20, 1843, to the Queen wrote:

"The Chief of Kythul, one of the protected Sikh States within thirty miles of Kurnaul, having died without heirs, four-fifths of his territory lapsed to the British Government, and the remaining fifth became the property of the distant branch of the family. A political officer was sent with a small escort, afterwards increased to 300 men, to receive possession of Kythul, which belongs to the lapsed portion of the territory, but he was met by passive resistance on the part of the female relations and the ministers of the late chief. The military retainers of the State flocked to Kythul and a most indiscreet disposition of a part of the small cavalry escort having been made, attack was invited, and the consequence was the repulse of the whole force with the political officer with some loss, and its retirement to Kurnaul.

Ellenborough, on being informed that troops would be wanted, had directed that so large a force should be taken as would preclude the chance of any collision. Unfortutnately the collision took place, through the indiscretion of the officer at Kythul, before the direction could be acted upon. On the 4th, however, 1800 troops were assembled at Thanesar, and on their arrival on the 16th within eight miles of Kythul it was found that the town and fort were evacuated by the armed retainers on the 15th. The ministers and the merchants of the place had come into the British camp on the 14th.

"What has happened is very much to be regretted, although it has been repaired.

"The affair might have become very serious had not the place been so soon approached by a preponderating force after the unfortunate collision on the 10th."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

INTRIGUES AGAINST THE PANJAB.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh died in 1839 when Auckland was the Governor-General of India. After his death there was anarchy, as it were, in the Panjab. The distracted state of that land was very coolly seen by the British. They did not move their little finger to put down the disturbances which were of almost daily occurrence in that province of the five rivers. There are reasons to believe that the British were the real authors of these disturbances. The *British Friend of India,* published in London, wrote in its issue of December, 1843, as follows:

"We have no proof that the Company instigated all the king-killing which has been perpetrated in the Panjab since Runjit died ; but, bearing in mind their trade, and the wonderful success which has attended their operations in that line, in Bengal, in the Carnatic, and elsewhere; both amongst the Moghuls and the Mahrattas, with Rajahs and Nabobs, we must say that we smell a rat; we strongly suspect the Company's corrupt influence has been employed in framing and fomenting these plots, which it is the interest and desire of the Crown and people of Britain rather to have counteracted, . , ... but a mercenary Company, wielding a hireling army, cannot live but by plunder . . . . . . but, we see too clearly, that backed as it necessarily now is, by all the resources of Britain, Lahore will be sacked, the Kingdom rent in pieces."*

The British, since a very long time, had been very eagerly looking forward to the day to become masters of the hoarded wealth of Ranjit Singh as well as of his dominion. To achieve this end they had been intriguing and conspiring against the Panjab. Ellenborough, even before his departure from England, had marked that province as one of his victims. Reading his Indian letters to the Queen and the Duke of Wellington, edited by Lord Colchester, between the lines, there can be no doubt, that the British instigated all the disturbances in the Panjab in order to weaken it and then to easily annex it.

Wellington, whose protege Ellenborough was, also had his eyes on the Panjab. Writing to Ellenborough on 30th March, 1842, he said:

"Looking at our position in the North-West, I see upon the river Sutlej a short line of defence, covered by the Punjab and its rivers, with the Government of which country we are in alliance. It is true that the Sikh Government is in an unsettled state, and not what it was when governed by Runjeet Singh at the commencement of the war in Afghanistan. But the weakness of the government, or the absence of all government, in the Punjab, and the possibility of hostility in that part of the Sikh State, would be an additional inducement to the British Government to attend to the defences of our own weakest frontier, even if the consequences of the state of confusion in the government of the Punjab should eventually require the active interference of the British Government in order to settle the government of a country where tranquillity is so essential to its own protection and safety."

"While these measures should be in the course of execution, it would be necessary that an army should be assembled towards the Sutlej....

"An army in this position might maintain itself. It might move forward into the Punjab, whether

* (Pages 247-248).

as an offensive movement, with a view to conquest, or as one defensive, with a view to attack its enemy at the passage of some of the rivers in that country, or to threaten the communications of an enemy advancing from the North-West."

Writing to Lord Fitzgerald on 6th April, 1842, his grace the Iron Duke said:

"I am very glad to see such good accounts of the state of the Sikh Government. It must be very desirable to maintain its existence in the Punjab. But this I must say, if we are to maintain our position in Afghanistan, we ought to have Peshawar, the Khyber Pass, Jellalabad, and the passes between that post and Cabul."

The Iron Duke after all blurted out the necessity for taking the Panjab. No wonder that his protege, Ellenborough, should have tried his best to create dissensions and distractions in the Panjab in order to get it converted into a British Province. The Machiavellian policy that he was following to get his object accomplished, his lordship has himself narrated with brutal frankness in some of his letters to the Duke and the Queen. Thus in his letter of 7th June, 1842, he wrote to the Duke:

"I have already, as you are aware, said what I could to dissuade the Sikhs or rather Dhian Singh and Gholab Singh, the Jummoo Rajahs, from their wild views of conquest beyond the Himalayas....I have at the same time not discouraged another folly of theirs—that of advancing their frontier towards Cabul....If they accede to this arrangement and endeavour to carry it out, we shall have placed an irreconcilable enemy to the Afghans between them and us, and hold that enemy to the Afghans, occupied as he must be in defending himself against them, in entire subjection to us by our position upon the Sutlej, within a few marches of Umritsir and Lahore. Such I wish to make our position on our North-Western frontier."

Again he wrote to the Duke on October 18th, 1842:

"I agreed to permit the Sikhs to occupy Jellalabad on our retiring from it....You will see into what a false position their ambition leads them. They will be obliged to keep their principal force in that quarter, and Lahore and Umritsir will remain with insufficient garrison, within a few marches of the Sutlej, on which I shall, in twelve days, at any time, be able to assemble three European and eleven native battalions, one European regiment of cavalry, two regiments of Native cavalry and two irregular cavalry, and twenty-four guns.

"The state of the Punjab is, therefore, under my foot. I only desire, however, that it should be faithful and innocuous. The conflict of parties in the Punjab will render it more dependent every year, and indeed, he who knows it best does not think the Government can last a year. I intend to be most courteous and liberal to both parties, and to wait till I am called in."

In his letter of January 18,1843 to the Duke, he thus described the Sikh army:

"A return mission was sent to Lahore, and most cordially received. The Maharaja paraded 65,900 men and 200 guns; but it took eight hours to get them into line, and when placed they did not move. Half the guns were without draught. The irregulars are said to have been very fine. The troops are disciplined, some in the French, some in the English, and some in the Sikh manner, and there is no subordination. The arrival of General Ventura is anxiously expected by the army. I am glad all is safe before he comes."

It is not improbable that General Ventura was an emissary in the pay of the British with the Sikh army. When General Ventura returned, he had some communication with him. So he wrote to the Duke on 20th October, 1843:

"Ventura anticipates a long anarchy, from which the ultimate refuge will be in our protection; I agree with him."

Regarding what he called the "game," he wrote in the same letter to the Duke:

"The time cannot be very distant when the Punjab will fall into our management, and the question will be what we shall do as respects the Hills. Probably the Hills will be very much divided under separate governments, and I look to the protection of our Government being ultimately extended to the Sikhs of the Plains and the Rajpoots of the Hills, and the Mussalmans of Mooltan, precisely as it is now to the Sikh Chiefs on the left of the Sutlej. The Khalsa lands are worth half a million, and the payments from the Jagheer may be as much. There would also be lapses of estates. *I do not look to this state of things likely to occur next year, but as being ultimately inevitable if we do not bring on union against ourselves and indisposition to our rule by some precipitate interference. I should tell you, however, that there is, as there long has been, a great disposition, even in quarters not military, to disturb the game.*"

The words put in italics, used with brutal frankness, need no comments. On 16th February, 1844, Ellenborough wrote to the Queen :

"Rajah Heera Singh remains at Lahore without power over the army. One regiment is already arrived at Lahore from Peshawar against orders, in order to extort more pay, and it remains unpunished. Other regiments at Peshawar threaten to leave it, and it seems doubtful whether this mutinous desertion of Peshawar by the Sikh troops may not enable the Afghans to reoccupy it.

"In the hills, Rajah Gholab Singh is extending his power with his usual unscrupulous disregard of the rights of others and of the supremacy of the State he pretends to serve. This conduct, however, makes him very odious to the Sikhs at Lahore.......

"...It is to be hoped that the state of the Punjab may not render necessary in December next an operation beyond the Sutlej : but every prudent preparation will be made with a view to enabling the army to undertake that operation whenever it may become necessary. *It must be always viewed as a measure which can only be deferred.* Your Majesty may be assured that Lord Ellenborough is fully aware of its magnitude and its importance. He knows that it cannot be devoid of great risk, and that, under all circumstances, it must be of a protracted character. Lord Ellenborough knows your Majesty's earnest desire to maintain peace and your Majesty may at once rely on his doing everything which can prudently be done to avoid war and at the same time to secure success in a war, should it become inevitable."

One looks in vain in the public records to find anything to show that Ellenborough ever took any steps to avoid war. On the contrary, he did everything that lay in his power to provoke the Sikhs to hostilities. We find him writing to the Queen on the 21st April, 1844:

"Lord Ellenborough cannot but feel that the termination of the present state of things in the Punjab is essential to the security of the British power in India; *but he will wait, cautiously preparing our strength for a contest he would willingly defer, but which he considers inevitable.*"

Writing to Wellington on 20th April, 1844, he said:

"We can only consider our relations with Lahore to be those of an armed truce.

"I earnestly hope nothing may compel us to cross the Sutlej, and *that we may have no attack to repel till November, 1845.* I shall then be prepared for anything. In the meantime we do all we can in a quiet way to strengthen ourselves."

The words put in italics are very significant ones. The Sikhs crossed the Satlaj about the time which, according to Ellenborough's calculation, would be convenient for the British to receive them. Does it not show conclusively the deep scheme of the British in bringing on the war with the Sikhs ?

Ellenborough was very jubilant over his successful Machiavellian policy which he followed towards the Sikhs. He wrote to the Duke on May 9, 1844 :

"The destruction of Soocheyt Singh has had the effect of entirely separating the Hills, under Gholab Singh, from the Plains, still ruled in a manner by Heera Singh. *Everything is going on there as we could desire, if we looked forward to the ultimate possession of the Punjab.*

"I expect that by the end of December there will be on the Sutlej seventy boats of about thirty-five tons each, exactly similar and each containing everything necessary, for its equipment as a pontoon. They will bridge the Sutlej anywhere, and when not so used they will convey our troops up and down, and save us an enormous charge for the hire of boats."

After reading the above no none could say that Ellenborough did anything to avoid rupture with the Sikhs. Nay, his letter to the Queen dated 10th June, 1844, from which extracts are given below, would lead one to suspect that the British instigated some of the Sikhs residing in their territory to make raids on the Lahore State.

"Your Majesty will have already become acquainted with the issue of the conflict which took place on the right bank of the Sutlej within a march of Ferozepore, on the 7th of May, between a large body of the troops of Heera Singh and the force which was apparently accompaying Bhae Beem Singh to Lahore, for the purpose of substituting Uttur Singh for Heera Singh as vizier.

"This Bhae Beem Singh was deemed a holy man, and regarded with much superstitious reverence by the Sikhs. Uttur Singh was the surviving brother of Ajeet Singh, the murderer of the late Maharajah. He had been a refugee at Thanesir, near the Jumna, in British territory, since the death of his brother, and only joined Bhae Beem Singh a day or two before the battle.

"Bhae Beem Singh, Uttur Singh, and Cashmeera Singh (an adopted son of the Late Runjeet Singh) were killed.

"The troops of Heera Singh have been induced to fight under the impression that Uttur Singh was invading the Punjab in alliance with the British Government......

"It is much to be regretted that Uttur Singh should have been permitted to move from Thanesir to the Sutlej with the known object of acting against the Lahore Government. This error of the British agent renders it impossible to protest against the violation of the strict letter of the treaty which was committed by the Sikhs, whose troops were sent to the left bank to intercept Uttur Singh; and under all the circumstances, it has been deemed expedient to make no representation upon the subject, but to allow the whole matter to be forgotten."

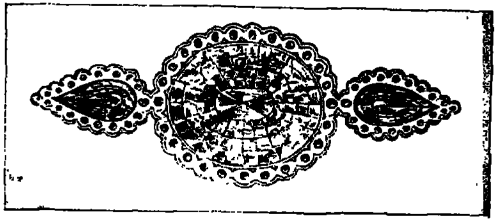
This letter is written by one trained in the school of occidental diplomacy of Machiavelli and Talleyrand. But there is moral certainty, that the raid on the Lahore Government was instigated and aided by the British. Had the raid been a success, the British Government would have been benefited by it. But as it turned out to be a failure, of course, Ellenborough had to deny any connection with it.

Ellenborough did not remain in India to witness the contest with the Sikhs which he considered inevitable. He should be charged with creating disorder in the Sikh raj. His correspondence was not published till 1874. Otherwise, Mir Shahmat Ali would not have written in the following strain in his well-known work on the *Sikhs and Afghans,* published in 1847 by John Murray of London:

"It was indeed highly mortifying to every friend of both governments to see the successor of so celebrated a ruler as Ranjeet Singh, so miserably treated; and that the British Government, which had made so many pledges of friendship and professed such a sincere and lasting regard for the government of his father, should have remained a passive spectator of the bloody deeds of his grandson to destroy the rightful authority of his own son. What is the world to think of such a policy?"

Then in a footnote, the author adds:

Maharaja Ranjit Singh



The Koh-i-Noor or Mountain of Light

Maharajah Dalip Singh

"The motive was *non-interference*; but its undoubted effect was anarchy and confusion, brought about by a succession of personal struggles for power which, having caused the extermination, by assassination of each other of the principal actors, destroyed the vital principle of the state, and led to an assumption of its authority by a mutinous soldiery, productive of a state of disorganisation in its affairs, on which we have *ultimately* justified a *military interference* in them, which a timely exercise of our political influence would have averted." *

The Ellenborough correspondence would have also greatly strengthened the conclusions at which Captain Cunningham, the author of the history of the Sikhs, arrived as to the causes of the First Sikh War.

* P. 545.

CHAPTER LXXVII

OTHER ACTS OF ELLENBOROUGH

Ellenborough had his attention directed to the rich Muhammadan principality of the Deccan. With his pronounced antipathy to and hatred of Muhammadans, whom he always tried to reduce to political non-entity, he would have gladly exterminated the existence of the State of Hydarabad (Deccan) like that of its namesake in Sindh, had he got an opportunity to do so. His correspondence shows that he was trying to seize any opportunity to absorb that State. Thus he wrote to the Queen from Agra on May 11, 1843:

"The financial difficulties of the Nizam's Government are become very serious, and it may become absolutely necessary to adopt some measure for his relief. Lord Ellenborough would willingly defer any such measure until it might be made the condition of some decided improvement of the relations between the British Government and that of the Nizam, having for its object the condition of his Highness's dominions."

The significance of the diplomatic language in which the above letter is clothed is too apparent to need comment.

The following extract from his letter to the Queen dated Allahabad, June 27, 1843, reveals the hostile intentions that he entertained against the State of Hydarabad:

"Some persons engaged in the insurrection of 1841 and 1842 have proceeded to Berar from Hyderabad in the Deccan, and numerous Arabs are entertained there. The day cannot be distant when it will be absolutely necessary to interfere with the strong arm for the expulsion of the Arabs from the Nizam's dominion, in which they now occupy half the forts; but Lord Ellenborough deems it advisable to do one thing at a time, and circumstances do not yet allow of our devoting our force to the permanent pacification of the Deccan."

How he wanted to absorb the Nizam's principality is evident from his letter to the Queen dated August 13, 1843:

"The financial difficulties of the Nizam's Government have led to the resignation of the old minister, and their tendency is to place the whole of his Highness's dominions for a series of years, if not permanently, under the British administration, in consideration of a loan of a million, which must be advanced for the payment of the troops and of debts to bankers and others. The decision of the Nizam upon the several propositions submitted to his Highness will be known in a few days."

Lord Ellenborough's hands were too full with affairs in Northern India to deal that blow to the Nizam's dominions which he had intended.

Even before his departure from England, Ellenborough had marked out Nepal as his intended victim. Ever since his arrival in India, he kept a very watchful eye on all the political transactions of that State. There can be no doubt that he was eagerly looking forward for an opportunity to deprive it of its independence. But fortunately for the "heathen" natives of that principality, the Christian Governor-General had no opportunity to inpose the yoke of subjugation on their necks.*

* In his letters to the Queen Victoria as well as the Duke of Wellington, Ellenborough has

There was one other small state whose independent existence was wiped out by Ellenborough. That small state was Jytpur in Bundelkhand. Sleeman, who was Political Agent of Bundelkhand at that time, should be held responsible for this act of spoliation. Ellenborough wrote to the Queen on December 19, 1842:

"In Bundelcund the two forts belonging to the Rajah of Jytpore, who in the course of the last summer, evinced hostility to the British Government, were taken possession of, without resistance, on the 27th of November.

"The Raj of Jytpore has been confiscated and given to the most popular chief in Bundelkhand. The grounds upon which this has been done, and the probable effects of the measure, will be shown to your Majesty by the enclosed copies of letters to and from Major Sleeman.

"The camp of the Rajah of Jytpore was attacked on the 7th instant, and he made his escape with about ten followers."

It need hardly be added that the whole transaction was high-handed and certainly not one of justice. After this no wonder that Sleeman was such a *persona grata* with those Governors-General who wanted to absorb the principalities of any native sovereigns. This accounts for his appointment to the Residency at Gwalior and later at Lucknow.

Ellenborough was no friend of Muhammadans, and consequently could not have been of the Mughal Emperor of Delhi. Up to his time, every Britisher in India used to pay his homage to the titular Emperor of Delhi. But he stopped this and thus lowered the dignity of the descendant of Babar and Akbar. Edwards in his *Reminiscences of a Bengal Civilian* writes:

"The Governor-General immediately issued instructions, forbidding the presentation in future to the King of any offerings by British subjects. and directed me to ascertain the average annual amount of gifts received by his Majesty for the past ten years, in order that an equivalent amount should be added to the royal stipend from the British treasury in future."*

It should be remembered, as stated by the same writer in another place of his work (p. 307), that

"Up to 1842, the Governors-General who visited Delhi were in the habit of presenting, through their Secretaries, a nuzzur of 101 gold mohurs to the Emperor as a mark of fealty and acknowledgment of holding the British territories in India subject to his authority......It is scarcely, therefore, to be wondered at that the Imperial house of Delhi never lost, in native estimation, its position of dignity and importance."

No wonder that the Delhi people joined the Mutineers in 1857 to avenge the wrongs and injuries that had been inflicted on the representative of the House of Babar.

Ellenborough had in contemplation to further lower the dignity of the Mughal. This is evident from the correspondence between him and the Duke of Wellington. The latter in his letter dated Walmer Castle, September 27, 1842, wrote to Ellenborough:

very frequently mentioned all that was passing in Nepal and of which he could get any information. See pages 32, 37, 41, 58, 63,.69, 79, 88, 114, 157, 195 any 200 of Colchester's *Ellenborough's Indian Administration.*

* P. 57.

"However inconvenient to retain the Moghul and his palace, and his court and retainers, in the town, I should prefer to leave them there than to incur the odium of removing them, and of exposing—particularly the Moghul and his family—to the inconvenience and expense, and degradation in the eyes of those attached to him, of a forced removal.

"In my opinion, the principle on which the works at Delhi are constructed is a good one. . . .

"It appears to me that the palace of the Mogul would be under the guns of this citadel." . . .

In reply to the above letter, Ellenborough wrote on December 18, 1842:

". . . I had already come to your conclusion that it would be an unadvisable step to do anything having the appearance of violence towards the old king. With his successor, my successor may be able to make some arrangement for the transfer to us of the citadel. *To have in our hands the ancient seat of empire, and to administer the government from it, has ever seemed to me to be a very great object.*"

Had Ellenborough remained a few more years in India he would have done what he had expressed in the words which we have italicised in the above extract. The humiliation of the king of Delhi would have been then complete.

As said so many times before, Ellenborough was no friend of Muhammadans. He annexed the Muhammadan state of Sindh. He had his eyes on the Nizam's dominion in the Deccan. He humiliated the Mughal king of Delhi in the estimation of others. But then there was the Musalman kingdom of Oudh. Almost every Governor-General looked covetously to that kingdom. The Muhammadan kings of Oudh used to be bled by Christian Governors-General of India. Ellenborough also bled one, and it was, therefore, perhaps that he did not propose to annex that kingdom to the British dominions during his regime.

The king of Oudh used to be the wet-nurse of the British rulers of India. So he was made to act again towards Ellenborough. Writing to the Duke of Wellington in September 16, 1842, the Governor-General wrote:

"I have got the King of Oudh to lend 10 lacs more."

Of course, it was not convenient for Ellenborough to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs and therefore, he left the kingdom of Oudh out of consideration of annexation in his time.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

RECALL OF ELLENBOROUGH

Ellenborough's foreign policy was an aggressive one. He had for his prototype the Marquess Wellesley, whose example he was desirous of closely imitating, as indeed on whose advice he was acting. During his tenure of office of two years and a half, proportionately he fought more battles than Wellesley during the same period. His lordship in the speech delivered at the dinner given in his honour by the Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company, November 3, 1841, said that he was going out to India

"*to restore peace to Asia,* and with peace, that sense of entire security, without which peace itself is almost valueless ; from that peace, so secured, to draw the means of creating a surplus revenue, the best guarantee of public improvement, and of liberal, even of *honest* government—in possession of that surplus revenue, to emulate the magnificent beneficence of the Mahometan Emperors, in their great works of public utility, to perfect and extend the canals of irrigation." ..."

But all the time he was in India, he did nothing to restore peace to Asia or improve the condition of the people of India. He took no step 'for creating a surplus revenue.' He enhanced the tax on salt in order to promote the happiness of the people of India.

His conduct in the administration of India was such that it called forth the censure of the Court of Directors of the East India Company. In his letter of 5th April, 1843' the Duke of Wellington informed Ellenborough why the authorities at home were not pleased with him. He wrote:

"It appears that the Court has stated several grounds of complaint with you. I say nothing of the gates of Somnauth, which is, I think, made a *cheval de bataille* to acquire popularity for the cause. ...

"The Court then complains of your continued absence from the seat of your Government, Fort William, and of the consequent separation from your Council. It complains of large expenses to be incurred for forming new cantonments, barracks, and stations for the army, European troops as well as native, without previously taking the pleasure of the Court, or giving to it the requisite information of the necessity for the new and expensive establishments, of the ammount of the expense which they will occasion, or enabling the Court to acquire such information by the perusal of the reports recorded on the proceedings of the Court in the usual course, and the deliberations of the members of the Court thereupon, before any such plans could be adopted and ordered for execution, even if the previous sanction of the Court should not, according to order, have been applied for."

Again in Parliament also his conduct was censured. The Duke writing to Ellenborough on 5th July, 1843, said:

"The opposition in Parliament had, at a very early period of the session, endeavoured by sarcasm and observations upon passages and words in your general orders and letter upon the gates of Somnauth, to ridicule your pacific professions, to place them in contrast with your conduct in Scinde, and to draw the conclusion that, notwithstanding your blame of the conduct of your predecessor in office, you were acting with views of conquest inconsistent with the declarations and principle of the law"

The conduct of Ellenborough in the administration was such that the Court of Directors were compelled to recall him. He was an autocrat and wished to govern India not with "benevolent" but absolute "despotism." In his letter to Wellington, dated April 22, 1843, he wrote:

"Our only danger is from England, because people there will think that India can be governed according to their own last new notion, and still more will believe that the press of India tells one word of truth. Then against us, too, we have the jobbing and little-mindedness of the Directors, intriguing and caballing against a Government nominally their own, because it will not make patronage practically their own. India can only be governed by great views, and as India ; and these gentlemen would have me govern it on little views, and as England; but that I will not do."

So after all the autocrat had to deliver the Government of India into the hands of Lord Hardinge on 1st August, 1844.*

* Sir Robert Peel, in a private letter to Hardinge wrote :

"Ellenborough has been here some days. We have made him an Earl and given him the Red Ribbon. I have met him twice at Windsor Castle. Lord Lonsdale is willing and wishes to relinquish the Post Office. I wrote to Lord Ellenborough a few days since offering him that office and a seat in the Cabinet, or if he preferred it, an attempt on my part to induce the Duke of Buccleuch to take the Post Office, leaving the Privy Seal vacant for Ellenborough. Ellenborough, perhaps wisely, declined both proposals, in a friendly letter, intimating, however, that his head has been so full of grand conceptions and schemes with great results, that Post Offices and Privy Seals were beneath his notice. I think he will find that he has erroneous notions of his position. His return here has not caused the slightest sensation. There is no curiosity, among this most curious people, to see so great a perfomer on the Indian theatre. He will not infect the people of this country with the love of military glory. If you can keep peace, reduce expenses, extend commerce, and strengthen our hold on India by confidence in our justice and kindness and wisdom, you will be received here on your return with acclamations a thousand times louder and a welcome infinitely more cordial than if you have a dozen victories to boast of and annex the Punjab to the overgrown Empire of India."

CHAPTER LXXIX

LORD HARDINGE'S ADMINISTRATION
(1844-48)

A certain British officer, under the pseudonym of "Carnaticus," wrote in the *Asiatic Journal* for May, 1821 :

"We must at once admit that our conquest of India was, through every struggle, more owing to the weakness of the Asiatic character than to the bare effect of our own brilliant achievements ; and empire after empire rolled in upon us when we were merely contemplating the protection of our trade, or repelling insult. Kingdoms have been vacated for us, as if by magic spell ; and on the same principle we may set down as certain, that whenever one-twentieth part of the population of India becomes as provident and as scheming as ourselves, we shall run back again, in the same ratio of velocity, the same course of our original insignificance."

The scheming nature of the English stands in bold relief in the manner in which they succeeded in bringing about the war with the Sikhs. Even in the lifetime of Maharaja Ranjit Singh the English were conspiring against him. After his death during the regime of Ellenborough, the scheming English were making warlike preparations and fomenting dissensions amongst the Sikhs in order not to disturb the "game." The "game," according to Ellenborough, would not be fully prepared before November, 1845. Although he had to leave India before that time, yet the "game" was not to be given up. His departure from India did not mean that the policy which he was pursuing or which dominated his administration was to be given up. In his letter of July 2, 1844, to the Duke of Wellington, Ellenborough wrote :

"Immediately on the receipt of the news of my removal I advised the Government to send letters by express to all native Courts, to assure them that the change would not affect the policy of the Government, which would be altogether maintained by my successor. I wrote myself to the principal Residents to the same effect,..."

In the same letter he also wrote :

"I remain to receive Sir Henry Hardinge. All the public letters to England, which he cannot have seen, have been copied for him, and sent to Madras."

Sir Henry Hardinge was a kinsman by marriage of Ellenborough. So he, like Ellenborough, did not disturb the "game," but like him followed the same course.* The authorities in England expected to go to war with the Sikhs and therefore selected Hardinge, who was a soldier-statesman. Hardinge's biographer, his own son, writes :†

* In his letter to Major Broadfoot, dated Calcutta, June 17, 1844, Ellenborough wrote :

"You will have heard that the Court of Directors have thought fit to recall me. My successor will carry out all my views. He is my most confidential friend, with whom I have communicated upon all public subjects for thirty years."

† P. 48, Hardinge, Rulers of India Series.

"Without doubt the selection of a distinguished soldier, who also possessed the experience of a Cabinet Minister, rather pointed to the anticipation of war. A few years before, on the receipt of the news of the Kabul disasters (1842) Sir Henry Hardinge had been pressed to accept the command of the Indian army, which for urgent private reasons he was compelled to decline. Now, on being offered the higher office of the Governor-General, he felt it an imperative duty to waive all personal considerations."

Hardinge was ambitious and therefore he accepted the office of Governor-General. Sir Charles Napier, who knew Hardinge well, wrote about him :

"His ambition is unbounded, and though he would have faced the Directors fearlessly, and the press too, any day in the week, if it suited his purpose, he did not, because his ambition is to glide into elevation ; *he has wound and will wind like a serpent up the pillar of fame.*"*

It is clear that Peel's ministry, in anticipation of the war with the Sikhs, appointed Hardinge as Governor-General of India. And from the day of his assuming the duties of that office he applied himself assiduously to the amassing of troops and making other necessary warlike preparations on the then North-Western frontier. A writer in the *Quarterly Review* for June, 1846, wrote :

"That he (Hardinge) kept his eye on the Punjab, and was neither regardless of the confusion which its affairs were falling into, nor of the consequences to which this might possibly lead, is most certain. He had already directed the works at Ludhiana and Firozpur to be strengthened, and raised the garrison of the latter place from 4000 to 7000 men. The former was held by about 6000 ; and at Ambala, where Gough's head quarters were established, and among the cantonments in the rear there were about 7500 of all arms."

His son, in the biographical sketch (p. 76) already referred to above, has given in a tabular form the increased preparation made by Lord Hardinge in the different cantonments on the North-West frontier. The table is reproduced below :

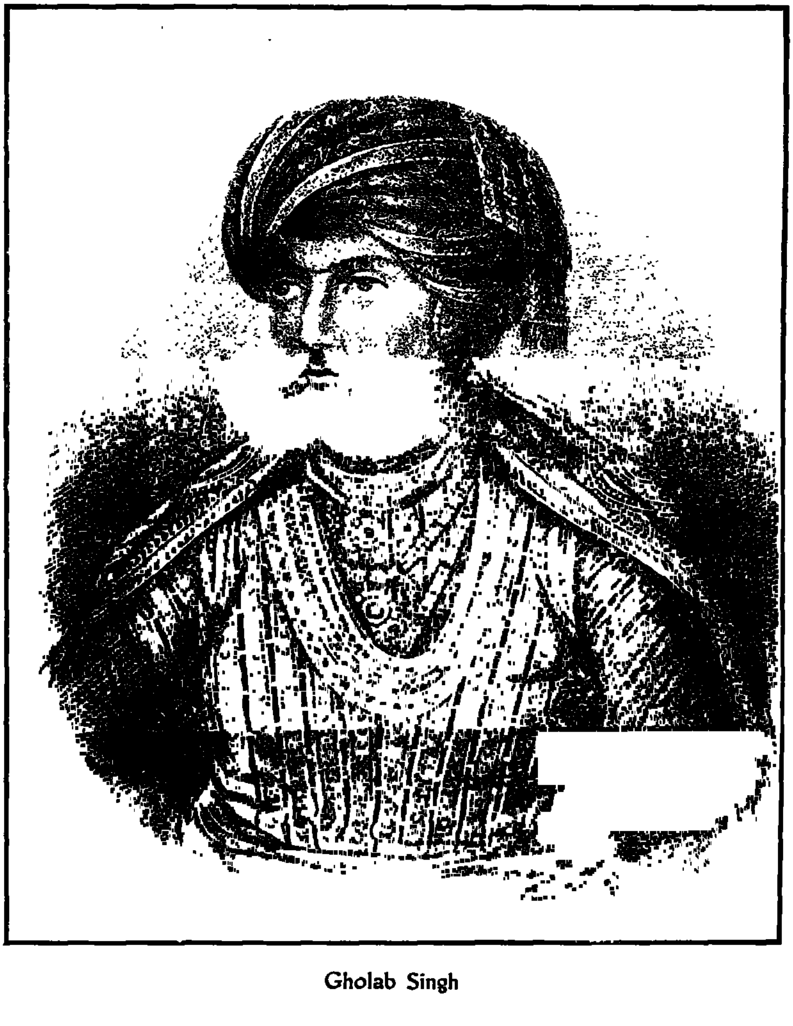
Post.	Strength as left by Ellenborough.	Strength at first breaking out of war.	Increased preparation made by Lord Hardinge.
Firozpur	4596 men 12 guns	10472 men 24 guns	5876 men 12 guns
Ludhiana	3030 „ 12 „	7235 „ 12 „	4205 „ 0 „
Ambala	4113 „ 24 „	12972 „ 32 „	8859 „ 8 „
Meerut	5873 „ 18 „	9844 „ 26 „	3972 „ 8 „
Whole Frontier, exclusive of Hill Stations.	17612 „ 66 „	40523 „ 94 „	22911 „ 28 „

Ellenborough had ordered fifty-six boats to be built on the Indus. When these were ready, they were brought up to Ferozpur in September, 1845, by Hardinge's order.†

* *Life of Sir Charles Napier*, Vol. IV, p. 205.

† The Governor-General's Private Secretary, who happened to be his own son, in a long and confidential letter, dated February 20, 1845, wrote to Major Broadfoot : "It is not desirable that the purposes to which these boats can be applied should unnecessarily transpire. ..

"*But if any inquiry should* be made hereafter, your answer will be that this flotilla of boats is not at present required on the lower Indus, that our commissariat arrangements do require the employment of boats between Ferozpore and Sukkur for the supply of the latter place with grain



Gholab Singh

In his letter of April 20, 1844, Ellenborough had written to Wellington:

"I earnestly hope nothing may compel us to cross the Sutlej, and that we may have no attack to repel till November, 1845. I shall then be prepared for anything. In the meantime we do all we can in a quiet way to strengthen ourselves."

So by November, 1845, warlike preparations on the part of the British were complete. And as by the middle of that month the Sikhs proclaimed war and after a few weeks' time actually crossed the Sutlej, there is but one conclusion to be drawn from these events, that the First Panjab War was a pre-arranged affair, just like the different parts assigned to the actors on a theatrical stage by the stage-master. The stage-master in this instance were the British trained in the school of occidental diplomacy of Machiavelli.

The Lahore Darbar, who were controlling the affairs of the Panjab, did not wish to go to war with the British. Their intentions were quite pacific, and accordingly they asked the British Agent, Major Broadfoot, for a British force to be permanently stationed at Lahore. That is to say, they were desirous of what is euphemistically called by Lord Wellesley "subsidiary alliance" with the British. But this was not convenient to the English, and so they did not accede to this request of the Darbar.

From the warlike preparations on the part of the British, from the dispatches and letters of that period, it is as clear as anything could be that it was the British who wanted war and not the Sikhs.

The occupant of the throne of Ranjit Singh before the outbreak of the War was an infant named Dalip Singh. Whether he was the son of the "Lion of the Panjab" is a very disputed point. The mother of Dalip Singh was Rani Jhinda. Her moral character resembled more that of the Empress Catherine of Russia than that of Queen Elizabeth of England. One of her favorites was Lal Singh. This man was made Vazir of Dalip Singh, that is to say, he was now the Prime Minister of the Sikh Raj. The British intrigued with this man, who was the virtual ruler of the Panjab and the paramour of the Queen-mother.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Sikh forces at this time was a Brahmin by name Tej Singh. This man was not a native of the Panjab but of the district of Saharanpur. He rose from very humble circumstances and was ready to do anything for "glittering gold." Accordingly the British intrigued with him and made him their tool in serving their end.

The Rajput chiefs of the hills on whom Ranjit leaned for support and who had been ennobled by him also proved treacherous to the cause of the Sikhs. Of the

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and these boats are purposely adapted for military as well as trading purposes and form part of our military means and establishment on the Indus applicable to any purpose for which they may be required either on that river or on the Sutlej; to which you may add several iron steamers which it is convenient to the Government to employ on these rivers for the conveyance of troops, stores, and supplies; and of course, available for the offensive as well as for defensive objects, not unnecessarily entering into these explanations, but stating the truth, if explanation be proper." *The Career of Broadfoot*, p. 284.

three Jammu brothers, Dhyan and Suchet had met with violent deaths and so did Hira, the son of Dhyan Singh. Only one of these brothers, Gulab Singh, was surviving on the eve of the First Sikh War. His treachery to the Sikhs will be narrated further on.

The Rajputs, who from motives of pride practised infanticide, were not ashamed to give their daughters to Muhammadan chiefs and nobles to grace their harems as wives or rather as concubines.

When the Mughal Empire was *in extremis* we do not find Rajputs making common cause with the Marathas, Jats and Sikhs to re-establish Hindu supremacy in India. The man who treacherously captured Shivaji and brought him a prisoner to the camp of Aurangzeb was also a Rajput, named Jai Singh. No wonder that the memory of that incident rankling in the breasts of patriotic Marathas made them in the zenith of their power carry fire and sword through Rajputana. Tod, ignoring these circumstances, has painted the Maratha conquerors of Rajputana in the darkest colour possible.

So the Dogra Rajput, Gulab Singh of Jammu was only acting on the traditions of Rajasthan when he treacherously behaved towards the Sikhs. The British chose him as one of their vile tools for carrying out their designs on the Sikh Raj.

The British agent on the North-Western Frontier at Ludhiana during the last days of Ellenborough's Governor-Generalship in India was one Colonel Richmond. This officer did not satisfy his Lordship with his diplomatic skill. So Ellenborough recommended his removal from the then North-Western Frontier. He was to be replaced by one Major Broadfoot, an officer who had distinguished himself in Afghanistan and was afterwards appointed to the charge of the Tenasserim Provinces in Burma.* But his appointment to the North-West Frontier was ordered and made by Hardinge. Writing to Ellenborough from Amballa, on November 18, 1844, Broadfoot said :

"My appointment to this situation I can not but consider as being as much due to your Lordship as if directly made by you : for to Sir Henry Hardinge I was of, course, unknown, save through your Lordship. My only anxiety is, that I may be able to do justice to the nomination. . . . . . .

"From Sir Henry Hardinge I have received the greatest and most marked kindness. It is to you

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* Lieutenant Colonel Havelock, in his letter to Major Broadfoot, dated Simla, September 9, 1844, communicating to that officer his appointment as Agent for the North-Western Frontier, wrote:

" ...to put emolument out of the question, our North-West Frontier is the point of all others the most attractive to a soldier. You are wanted there ; for not only is our information defective, but Col. Richmond, though a very fair regimental officer, is by no means a man of calibre for such a charge, ..." (*Loc. Cit.* p. 215).

Major Broadfoot solicited Lord Ellenborough to be appointed to military service and Northern India, for he preferred war to peace. In his letter dated Mergui, December 13, 1843, to Lord Ellenborough, Broadfoot wrote:

"I have had some severe illness of late, but recently have had slight apoplectic attacks, which make it almost certain that I must for a time, if not permanently, quit the coast. Rest, or a change to military service with the climate of Northern India, would speedily restore me. . . . . . . Had my health not thus given way, I could not have ventured to make this request, greatly as Your Lordship knows I desire to serve again in the field, especially during Your Lordship's government. . . . . . I could not recover if the army were in the field, and I am idler elsewhere." (*Loc, Cit.* p. 202).

This letter leaves no doubt that Broadfoot was appointed an agent because Ellenborough wanted war with the Sikhs and also because Broadfoot was *considered the proper diplomatist to bring it about.*

I owe it, and I felt on that account the more pleasure in it, being more generally than any one else but Durand known as *an Ellenborough man.**

He was chosen, because he seems to have been a past master of occidental diplomacy and also for being "too prone to war." At the time of his appointment to the above post, Broadfoot himself in the letter to Ellenborough from which extracts have already been given above, wrote, that "on our [English] side, there is in general a desire for war."

Broadfoot was playing that part of an occidental diplomatist so well that Hardinge wrote to Ellenborough on Dec. 23, 1844, that "Broadfoot is in his element on the frontier."

Even after his departure from India, Ellenborough was very keenly watching what he had described as the "game" in the Panjab. In a letter to his protege, Broadfoot, Ellenborough wrote from London on 7th May, 1844:

"Our friends on the other side of the Sutlej have been doing apparently :al we could desire, or nearly so; but still, I fear, they will be alarmed by the close neighbourhood of so many of our troops, and make up their quarrels if they can"†

His Lordship did not wish that "our friends" that is, the Sikhs, should make up their quarrels. Broadfoot, as *"an Ellenborough man"*, was also doing all that his Lordship could desire. The quarrels in the Panjab were evidently being fomented by the British.

From the day Broadfoot took charge of the agency on the Frontier, he was doing all that was well-calculated to exasperate and provoke the Sikhs to make rupture with the British. Captain Cunningham, who, as he states in his *History of the Sikhs*, "had free access to all the public records bearing on the affairs of the frontier," has very scathingly exposed some of those acts and doings of Broadfoot which provoked the war with the Sikhs. He writes:

"One of Major Broadfoot's first acts was to declare the Cis-Sutlej possessions of Lahore to be under British protection equally with Putteeala and other chiefships, and also to be liable to escheat on the death or deposition of Maharaja Dalip Singh. This view was not formally announced to the Sikh Government, but it was notorious, and Major Broadfoot acted on it ..."

"Further, the bridge-boats which had been prepared at Bombay, were despatched towards Ferozpoor in the autumn of 1845, and Major Broadfoot almost avowed that hostilities had broken out when he manifested an apprehension of danger to these armed vessels, by ordering strong guards of soldiers to escort them safely to their destination, and when he began to exercise their crews in the formation of bridges after their arrival at Ferozpoor."§

The author of the "Career of Major Broadfoot," a brother of that occidental diplomatist, has tried to refute these statements and assertions of Cunningham. But it must be admitted by all impartial critics and judges that that author has failed in his attempt. The above-named work is, however, very important, as the letters and correspondence published in it throw considerable light on the nature of occidental diplomacy practised by Broadfoot to provoke the war with the Sikhs.

* *Loc. Cit.* p. 241.

† (*Loc. Cit.* p. 307).

§ Pp. 297 *et seq.*

The then Governor-General of India, in a note on the memorandum by Mr. Clerk on the Lahore State, wrote on August 14, 1845 :

."If we are forced into war, let the rupture be caused by some prominent aggressive act. An offence to our dignity offered by a weaker Power would not be ground broad enough to occupy ; ..."

Again, writing to Lord Ellenborough, on October 23, 1845, Sir Henry Hardinge said :

"The Punjab must however, be Sikh or British ; ... The delay is merely a postponement of the settlement of the question ; *at the same time we must bear in mind that as yet no cause of war has been given.*"†

It is a significant fact that while "no cause of war" was given by the Sikhs, the British were making warlike preparations which could not befool anybody as to their intentions. As an occidental diplomatist, Major Broadfoot was trying to make every act of the Sikhs appear as a violation of the treaty, and aggressive in its nature and hence provocative of war. Writes the author of the career of Broadfoot :

"About the very time that the preceding letter was written [March, 1845], there occurred the first serious violation of our frontier. It was serious, not from the strength of the party which crossed the Sutlej without leave, but from the fact that it was a deliberate attempt to ascertain whether we were in earnest as regarded recent warnings addressed to the Durbar.

"Broadfoot was in camp at Tira, a considerable place on the old road from Ludhiana to Firozpur, when the news reached him that a party of Sikh cavalry had crossed the river and taken up a position at Talwandi, a village near Harike Patan and not far from Sobraon..."§

What Broadfoot's brother calls a first "serious violation of our frontier" was no such thing at all, as will appear from what Captain Cunningham says regarding this incident. He writes :

"Again, a troop of horse had crossed the Sutlej near Ferozpoor, to proceed to Kotkupoora, a Lahore town, to relieve or strengthen the mounted police ordinarily stationed there; but the party had crossed without the previous sanction of the British agent having been obtained, agreeably to an understanding between the two governments, based on an article of the treaty of 1809, but which modified agreement was scarcely applicable to so small a body of men proceeding for such a purpose. Major Broadfoot nevertheless required the horsemen to recross ; and as he considered them dilatory in their obedience, he followed them with his escort, and overtook them as they were about to ford the river. A shot was fired by the English party, and the extreme desire of the Sikh commandant

* *Loc. Cit.* p. 323.

† *Ibid.*, p. 355.

Even as early as January 23, 1845, Hardinge, writing to Ellenborough, said :

"Even if we had a case for devouring our ally in his adversity, we are not ready and could not be ready until the hot winds set in, and the Sutlej becomes a torrent. Moderation will do us no harm, if in the interval the hills and the plains weaken each other ; but on what plea could we attack the Punjab, if this were the month of October, and we had our army in readiness?

"Self-preservation may require the dispersion of this Sikh army ; the baneul influence of such an example is the evil most to be dreaded ; but exclusive of this case, how are we to justify the seizure of our friend's territory, who in our adversity assisted us to retrieve our affairs ?" *Loc. Cit.* p. 276

§ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

to avoid doing anything which might be held to compromise his government, alone prevented a collision."*

Broadfoot's brother is guilty of gross perversion of truth when he says that this "first serious violation of our frontier . . . was a deliberate attempt" on the part of the Darbar, etc. That this was no such thing is evident from Captain Cunningham's statement of the case quoted above. Of course Broadfoot tried to make a mountain out of a mole-hill and exaggerated the trivial offence, if any, of the Sikhs in order to make out a case and go to war against them. His letter to the Governor-General, therefore, can not be considered to contain the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Broadfoot's treatment of the Sikhs was contrary to all usages of international law. He left no stone unturned to provoke them to hostilities. The Lahore Darbar complained that

"the British had in four instances broken the treaty of friendship. The cases cited were: that Hakim Rai and his sowars had been treated with indignity : that Lal Singh, Adalati, had not been allowed to cross the Sutlej ; that the Lahore Ahlkars had been disrespectfully used ; and that Suchet Singh's gold had not been handed over to the Durbar."†

The charges of the Lahore Darbar against the British were grave. They were such as the British never attempted to refute.

The Lahore Darbar regretted and stood aghast at the ungrateful nature of the English. For,

"The Darbar had at great cost twice invaded Afghanistan for the benefit of the British. That English armies had traversed the Punjab to the detriment of its people and government, an injury which had been patiently borne by the Durbar. That we had been permitted to occupy Ferozpur, which by right belonged to the Durbar, on condition of keeping no more troops than were necessary for the management of the district, but that inspite of this, a great army was collected. Nor was this the only innovation since Col. Richmond's time; the passage of the Durbar's troops across the river had been forcibly prevented, and Lal Singh, Adalati, had been prohibited from crossing, though sent on duty by the Durbar."§

But gratitude never formed a marked trait in the character of any Christian nation and more particularly of the English, for they are reared on politics.

The Lahore Darbar were composed of men who as Asiatics in the simplicity of their hearts credited the English with the possession of feelings of gratitude. They were not acquainted with the nature and extent of the designs which the English cherished towards the Panjab. Had the English possessed any sense of gratitude they would have strained every nerve for the maintenance of the integrity of the Raj of Ranjit Singh.

Writing to Broadfoot, from Calcutta, on 19th January, 1845, Mr. (afterwards Sir Frederick) Currie said :

"If a genuine descendant of Runjeet were on the throne, with a capable minister, or even a tolerable aristocracy out of which to form a government, it might be a question with us whether,

* P. 296.

† *Ibid.*, p. 357.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 338.

in return for Runjeet's steady friendship, and his forbearance from taking advantage of us at times when he might have done so with present impunity to himself and infinite damage to us, we should aid his descendant in putting down the opposition of his own army and destroying hostile factions in his country. But in the present state of affairs in the Punjab such a measure is quite out of the question. It would be madness in us to think of expending blood and treasure to bolster up the puppet Dhuleep Singh, or to set up such a government as could be formed out of the elements that now exist at Lahore, which must owe its continuance henceforth to our power alone."*

The author of the "Career of Major Broadfoot" in publishing Mr. Currie's letter from which the above extract has been given, says that it

"is interesting because the writer's official position specially qualified him to express an opinion on the foreign policy of the Indian Government."

So what does the above extract mean ? The English had good reasons to believe that Dalip Singh was not "a genuine descendant of Ranjit."† Knowing this, why did the British Government insist on recognising no one else as ruler of the Panjab save Dalip Singh ? Of course, the English with their characteristic philanthropy were not to interfere in the affairs of the Panjab and so they connived at, if not fomented, all the disorders and anarchy in that province. But if they were sincere even in this declaration of their views, what was the meaning of Major Broadfoot's informing the Lahore Darbar,

"That the Governor-General had recognised Dhulip Singh as the sovereign, and would be no party to permitting any other successor to Ranjit." ?§

Do not all these facts go to prove that the English had their designs on the Punjab and therefore they would not recognise any one else save Dalip Singh as the successor of Ranjit ? And because Dalip Singh was not "a genuine descendant of Ranjit," therefore they did not render him any assistance to maintain himself on he throne of the Panjab.

The British were not only making warlike preparations, but their agents Major Broadfoot and his assistants were intriguing with the ministers and servants of the Lahore Darbar to secure their ends. They had also their emissaries in the Panjab.**

Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu, Raja Lal Singh, the minister of the Sikh Darbar, and Sirdar Tej Singh, the Commander-in-Chief of the Sikh army, were the vile instruments chosen by the English to intrigue with.

Even during the Governor-Generalship of Ellenborough, there are reasons to suspect that the English were trying to use Gulab Singh as a tool to accomplish their nefarious schemes regarding the Panjab. But Hardinge succeeded remarkably in his intrigues with that hill Rajput. Writing to Ellenborough on 20th February, 1845, Hardinge said :

* *Loc. Cit.* p. 268.

† The birth of Dalip Singh was considered of so little consequence as not to merit report to the British till some years after its occurrence. (See the "Career of Major Broadfoot," p. 224.)

§ P. 72, Hardinge [Rulers of India Series.]

** *The Career of Major Broadfoot,* p. 246.

"Golab Singh has again written to us, delighted to enter into terms with us. The first overture was a voluntary offer of his own, through a confidential emissary. The letter I now allude to is in answer to the intrigue of a Frenchman, a Mons. de St. Amand, a great scamp, who took it into his head to go to Jummoo from Loodiana, and after two days' delay, finding he could get no employment pretended he came on a mission from Captain Mills to propose an alliance with the Raja and the conquest of the Punjab. The Raja's letter by his own emissary had been previously received and rejected. The Frenchman impudently wrote to Cap. Mills from Jummoo that his proposals were accepted, and the Raja has now sent us a letter entreating us to lose no time. Broadfoot will show up the impostor, and M. de St. Amand will have his nose cut off or be hanged."

Of course, the above letter is written in very guarded and diplomatic language. But it need not deceive any one save a child or a fool as to the intrigues which the English were carrying on with the Dogra Chief. The Frenchman would not have been so impudent as to write to Captain Mills, had he not received instructions from him on the subject. The Frenchman had neither his nose cut off nor was hanged. Then the whole world knows how Gulab Singh was rewarded after the conclusion of the First Sikh War. This fact alone is sufficient to prove that the English had been intriguing with him.

In the same letter to Ellenborough, Hardinge wrote :

"Our assistants on the frontier will persist in dabbling in the intrigues of the Punjab, and I fear I must withdraw—and perhaps—"

Captain Nicolson, who was one of the assistants on the frontier, intrigued with Lal Singh. Writes Captain Cunningham :

"It was sufficiently certain and notorious at the time that Lall Sing was in communication with Captain Nicolson, the British agent at Ferozpur, but owing to the untimely death of that officer the details of the overtures made and expectations held out, cannot now be satisfactorily known."**

Ellenborough had written to Wellington on April 20, 1844 :

"I earnestly hope nothing may compel us to cross the Sutlej, and that we may have no attack to repel till November, 1845. I shall then be prepared for anything. In the meanwhile we do all we can in a quiet way to strengthen ourselves."†

November, 1845 was now approaching, and the English had also quietly strengthened themselves on the frontier. Hardinge had written to Ellenborough from Calcutta on January 23, 1845, that

"In the midst of this anarchy on the frontier, you will ask why am I here (Calcutta) ?

"The longer I can stay here, the better our chance of keeping the Sikh government on its legs."§

As it was no longer necessary to keep the Sikh government on its legs, so Hardinge moved in the middle of October towards the frontier.

The warlike preparations of the English on, as well as the movement of the Governor-General of India towards, the frontier left no one in the dark as to the real intentions of the English towards the Sikhs. The former had done everything in their power to provoke the Sikhs to war. But the Sikhs bore everything patiently, because they

* Broadfoot's Career, p. 282.

** *Ibid.*, p. 305 f. 12

† Colchester's Ellenborough, p. 435.

§ Boardfoot's Career, p. 277.

were conscious of their weakness. The Christians did not find, and could not invent, any pretext yet for "devouring" their heathen ally. They had now to leave to their emissaries to accomplish that which was so dear to their hearts. These emissaries goaded on the Sikhs to violate the frontier and go to war against the English. Writes Cunningham :

"Had the shrewd committees of the armies observed no military preparations on the part of the English, they would not have heeded the insidious exhortations of such mercenary men as Lal Singh and Tej Singh; although in former days they would have marched uninquiringly towards Delhi at the bidding of their great Maharaj. But the views of the government functionaries coincided with the belief of the impulsive soldiery, and when the men were tauntingly asked whether they would quietly look on while the limits of the Khalsa dominion were being reduced, and the plains of Lahore occupied by the remote strangers of Europe, they answered that they would defend with their lives all belonging to the commonwealth of Govind, and that they would march and give battle to the invaders on their own ground."*

In a footnote to the above, Cunningham adds :

"The ordinary private correspondence of the period contained many statements of the kind given in the text§

Captain Nicolson, one of the Assistants on the frontier, wrote to Major Broadfoot on November 23, 1845 :

"Knowing that the Durbar and our government were in friendly relation—at least, that I had never been told the contrary—and in spite of that relation finding the head of the Durbar consenting to a hostile march against its allies and those supposed to be friendly to us the most active in bringing that march about ; the doubt *did* occur to one (not knowing anything of any cause of difference between the governments) whether the Durbar might not be consenting to the march of the army against us with your knowledge and to afford a chance of safety to the Maharaja and his mother and to the Ahlkars, now threatened with death by the troops, if they consent to any terms of accommodation."

Of course, as an occidental diplomatist, Broadfoot had to deny all that his assistant had alleged in his letter to him. But the denial should be taken for what it is worth. Nicolson, who from his situation at Ferozpur, must have possessed some knowledge of the nature of the intrigue between the British Government and some of the servants of the Sikh Darbar, would not have ventured to write in that manner to Broadfoot had he not good reasons to suspect that the Agent had been trying to raise traitors in the camp of the Sikhs and to corrupt their leaders.

There were some Christian adventurers of different nationalities of Europe in the employ of Ranjit Singh. These adventurers professing the Christian religion were unscrupulous, treacherous and ungrateful to a degree which could hardly be conceived of by non-Christian Asiatics. Hydar Ali as well as the Maratha princes had kept them in the service of their states.

But these European adventurers were never true to those whose salt they ate. They were even ready to cut the throats of their masters, because they happened to be non-Christian and coloured persons. Hence it was their creed not only to deceive their

* P. 299.

§ P. 300.

Lieutenant General Lord Gough

Viscount Hardinge

Raja Pratap Singh of Satara

employers and leave them in the hour of their need, but to betray them to their enemies.

After the death of Ranjit Singh, the military council of the Sikhs learning a lesson from the past did well in dismissing these European adventurers from the service of the state. This is as it should have been. One of these European adventurers was named General Ventura. After his dismissal from the service of the Sikhs he commenced intriguing against them. Mr. (afterwards Sir Frederick) Currie in a letter to Broadfoot written from Calcutta on January 19, 1845, said :

"I have had two or three long conversations with Gen. Ventura; ... The old Frenchman wished to give some valuable information to Sir Henry [Hardinge] to make him friendly to his interests...."*

There is no doubt, then, that General Ventura rendered valuable services to the British in their conspiracy against the Sikhs. Corrupted with promises and gold of the British, the Sikh leaders played into the hands of the designing and scheming foreigners and the pretext which the Governor-General was wanting to "devour our ally" was very easily supplied. The Sikhs were made to cross the Satlaj and the British who had been prepared to receive them (for the month of November 1845 was now over) were delighted beyond measure, for it furnished them with the *casus belli* of the war.

Broadfoot's biographer, writes that

"Both the Governor-General and the Agent, following implicitly the policy and opinion declared by Ellenborough, desired beyond everything to maintain the Sikh power in the Punjab, as the best possible barrier of British India against Afghanistan and the other Mussalman states."†

That neither Ellenborough nor Hardinge wanted to maintain the Sikh power in the Panjab is evident from their correspondence and the policy they pursued towards the Sikhs. It is anything but true then to say that the British "desired beyond everything to maintain the Sikh power in the Punjab."

* *Loc. Cit.*, p. 270.

† *Loc. Cit.*, p. 416.

CHAPTER LXXX

THE SIKHS CROSS THE SATLAJ—THE FIRST SIKH WAR

Sir Hugh Gough was the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army on the eve of the First Sikh War. Ellenborough had no confidence in him, and one of the reasons which induced his lordship during the period of his Governor-Generalship in not going to war with the Sikhs was the fact of Gough's being the Commander-in-Chief in India at that time. In his letter to Wellington, dated Calcutta, April 20, 1844, he wrote:

"I ought not to conceal from you that the anxiety I feel not to be called too suddenly into the field is much increased by a want of confidence in Sir Hugh Gough, who, with all his personal courage and many excellent qualities, certainly does not appear to possess the grasp of mind or the prudence which is essential to the successful conduct of great military operations. He would do admirably, I have no doubt, at the head of an advanced guard."*

Ellenborough, who even after his departure from India, was watching the "game" in the Panjab, wrote to Broadfoot from London, on 7th May, 1845, suggesting to bring up Sir Charles Napier of Sindh fame, to command the troops in the war with the Sikhs.†

Much of the disasters which befell the British forces was attributed to Gough being in supreme command of the troops. Writing to Peel, the Prime Minister of the day, after the battle of Ferozeshah, Hardinge said:

"It is my duty to Her Majesty, and to you as the head of the Government, to state, most confidentially, that we have been in the greatest peril, and are likely hereafter to be in great peril, if these very extensive operations are to be conducted by the Commander-in-Chief. These are painful avowals for me to make to you and *not* to communicate to him. I rely on your friendship to justify the disclosure of my sentiments, in a case where the safety of India is at stake. Gough is a brave and fearless officer, an honourable and amiable man, and, in despite of differences, a fine-tempered gentleman, and an excellent leader of a brigade or a division. He deserves every credit for his heroism in the field, but he is not the officer who ought to be entrusted with the conduct of the war in the Punjab. If I am afraid of making this avowal of my opinion to you, I am unfit for my present office. I respect and esteem Sir Hugh Gough, but I cannot risk the safety of India by concealing my opinion from you."

But it was not so much the incompetency of the Commander-in-Chief which accounted for the disasters which befell the British arms as the contempt which the British cherished for their Sikh opponents and quondam allies. Forming a very contemptuous opinion of the military character of the Sikh soldiers, the foreigners trusted for their success more to the intriguers and traitors whom they had raised in the camp of the Sikhs than solely to the operations of their swords and guns.§ Of course

* Colchester's Ellenborough, p. 435.

† Broadfoot's Career, p. 507.

§ Cunningham in his history of the Sikhs (p. 301) writes:

"In 1842 the Sikhs were held, as has been mentioned, to be unequal to cope with the Afghans,

their occidental diplomacy bore the desired fruits, but then the British did not estimate properly the military strength of their opponents.

The Governor-General was marching to the frontier, when the news reached him of the Sikhs having crossed the Satlaj. From his camp Lashkari Khan ke Serai, dated 13th December, 1845, the Governor-General issued a proclamation which amounted to a declaration of war—a document, which, as usually written by occidental diplomatists, abounded with lies and half truths* He declared the possessions of Maharaja Dalip Singh, on the left or British bank of the Satlaj, confiscated and annexed to the British territories.

William Edwards, who was with the Governor-General when the news reached him of the Sikhs having crossed the Satlaj, writes that Sir Henry

"directed me to spread out before him the map of the North-West Provinces, and point him out Delhi. I at once did so, remarking that Delhi was now far in our rear, distant from the frontier, and its importance, in a political point of view, had long passed away. 'Never mind,' replied his lordship, 'I want to see all the roads leading to it, for I have just received a letter

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and even to be inferior in martial qualities to the population of the Jummoo hills. In 1845 the Lahore soldiery was called a 'rabble' in sober official despatches, and although subsequent descriptions allowed the regiments to be composed of the yeomanry of the country, the army was still declared to be daily deteriorating as a military body. It is, indeed, certain that English officers and sepoys equally believed they were about to win battles by marching steadily and by the discharge of a few artillery shots rather than by skilful dispositions, hard fighting and a prolonged contest."

* "Declaration of war of 1845, *Proclamation by the Governor-General of India.* Camp, Lushkuree Khan ke Serai, December 13th, 1845.

"The British Government has ever been on terms of friendship with that of the Punjab.

"In the year 1809, a treaty of amity and concord was concluded between the British Government and the late Muharaja Runjeet Singh, the conditions of which have always been faithfully observed by the British Government, and were scrupulously fulfilled by the late Muharaja.

"The same friendly relations have been maintained with the successors of Muharaja Runjeet Singh by the British Government up to the present time.

"Since the death of the late Muharaja Shere Singh, the disorganized state of the Lahore Government has made it incumbent on the Governor-General in Council to adopt precautionary measures for the protection of the British frontier: the nature of these measures, and the cause of their adoption, were at the time, fully explained to the Lahore Durbar.

"Notwithstanding the disorganized state of the Lahore Government during the last two years, and many most unfriendly proceedings on the part of the Durbar, the Governor-General in Council has continued to evince his desire to maintain the relations of amity and concord which had so long existed between the two States, for the mutual interests and happiness of both. He has shown on every occasion, the utmost forbearance, from consideration to the helpless state of the infant Muharaja Dhuleep Singh, whom the British Government had recognized as the successor to the late Muharaja Shere Singh.

"The Governor-General in Council sincerely desired to see a strong Sikh Government re-established in the Punjab, able to control its army, and to protect its subjects; he had not, up to the present moment, abandoned the hope of seeing that important object effected by the patriotic efforts of the Chief and people of that country.

"The Sikh army recently marched from Lahore towards the British frontier, as it was alleged, by the orders of the Durbar, for the purpose of invading the British territory.

from the Duke of Wellington, in which he urges me most strongly to look after Delhi, reinforce its garrison and watch all roads leading to it, for the Sikhs would certainly make for it and if it fell into their hands, the place would, from the prestige attending its name, become at once a rallying point for the disaffected all over India, and the result might be most disastrous."*

So the garrison of Delhi was strengthened.

Had there been no treachery in the camp of the Sikhs, they would have, after crossing the Satlaj gone straight for Ferozepore.

But instead of attacking Ferozepore, Raja Lal Sing, to keep up appearances with the faithful soldiers of the Khalsa, led them on, and the result was the battle fought at Mudki on the 18th December.

As a result of the treachery of Lal Sing, the Sikhs were defeated and lost heavily. But the Sikh soldiers fought bravely and like devils. They inflicted heavy losses on the British troops. There was every likelihood of the Sikhs utterly crushing the British,

"The Governor-General's agent, by direction of the Governor-General, demanded an explanation of this movement, and no reply being returned within a reasonable time, the demand was repeated. The Governor-General, unwilling to believe in the hostile intentions of the Sikh Government, to which no provocation had been given, refrained from taking any measures which might have a tendency to embarrass the Government of the Muharaja, or to induce collision between the two States.

"When no reply was given to the repeated demand for explanation, while active military preparations were continued at Lahore, the Governor-General considered it necessary to order the advance of troops towards the frontier, to reinforce the frontier posts.

"The Sikh army has now, without a shadow of provocation, invaded the British territories.

"The Governor-General must therefore take measures for effectually protecting the British provinces, for vindicating the authority of the British Government, and for punishing the violators of treaties and the disturbers of the public peace.

"The Governor-General hereby declares the possessions of Muharaja Dhuleep Singh, on the left or British bank of the Sutlej, confiscated and annexed to the British territories.

"The Governor-General will respect the existing rights of all Jagheerdars, Zemindars, and tenants in the said possessions, who, by the course they now pursue, evince their fidelity to the British Government.

"The Governor-General hereby calls upon all the Chiefs and Sirdars in the protected territories to co-operate cordially with the British Government for the punishment of the common enemy and for the maintenance of order in these States. Those of the Chiefs who show alacrity and fidelity in the discharge of this duty, which they owe to the protecting power, will find their interests promoted thereby ; and those who take a contrary course will be treated as enemies to the British Government, and will be punished accordingly.

"The inhabitants of all the territories on the left bank of the Sutlej are hereby directed to abide peaceably in their respective villages, where they will receive efficient protection by the British Government. All parties of men found in armed bands, who can give no satisfactory account of their proceedings, will be treated as disturbers of the public peace.

"All subjects of the British Government, and those who possess estates on both sides of the river Sutlej who, by their faithful adherence to the British Government, may be liable to sustain loss, shall be indemnified and secured in all their just rights and privileges.

"On the other hand, all subjects of the British Government who shall continue in the service of the Lahore State, and who disobey the proclamation by not immediately returning to their allegiance, will be liable to have their property on this side the Sutlej confiscated, and themselves declared to be aliens and enemies of the British Government."

* *Reminiscences of a Bengal Civilian*, p. 41.

had there not been any traitors in their camp. Instead of shot and powder the Sikh soldiers were supplied with mustard seeds and flour. Of course, it was not possible for them to fight with those.

After the battle of Mudki the Sikhs retired to Ferozesha, where a very severe battle was fought, in which the English met with disasters unparalleled in the history of their warfare in India.

The Sikhs did not take advantage of disasters they had inflicted on the English at Ferozsha*.

The English passed a very anxious night on the battlefield at Ferozesha. Writes the author of the "Career of Broadfoot"

"It is not a matter of surprise that some officers were unequal to the emergency, and suggested retreat on Firozpur:...

"In case of disaster, which was far from impossible, the Governor-General sent orders to Mudki, where Mr. Currie was in charge of official papers of the Government of India, and Mr. Cust of the records of the Agency, for the destruction of all State papers. Sir Henry's son, Charles, who was private secretary, being a civilian, was ordered off the field. Major Somerset conveyed the order, and was mortally wounded about five minutes afterwards. Mr. Hardinge passed the night with Major Brind's battery, and rejoined the Governor-General next morning immediately after the Sikh Camp had been carried. Prince Waldemar of Prussia and his suite were also desired to leave the field, but not before Dr. Hoffmeister had been killed."†

But Cunningham, truly observes :

"Perhaps neither the incapacity nor the treason of Lal Singh and Tej Singh were fully perceived or credited by the English chiefs, and hence the anxiety of the one on whom the maintenance of the British dominion intact mainly depended."††

But anyhow the English won the battle, and they offered thanks to God for their success.§

"Unholy is the voice of loud thanksgiving over slaughtered men."

The Governor-General was not satisfied with having raised traitors like Lal Singh and Tej Sing in the camp of the Sikhs. Writes Cunningham.§§

"The anxiety of the Governor-General may be further inferred from his proclamation, encouraging

* See p. 97 of "Reminiscences of a Bengal Civilian," by Wm. Edwards, who attributes the inactivity of the Sikhs to the treachery of their leaders. He writes : "Had they advanced during the night, the result must have been very disastrous for us, as our European regiments were much reduced in number, and our ammunition, both for artillery and small arms, almost expended. It was inexplicable at the time to us why this fresh army had failed to advance and reinforce their comrades. Subsequently at Lahore, however, I was informed that their leaders had restrained the men on the pretext that the day was inauspicious for a battle, it by no means being the intention of the regency that their troops should be successful, but, on the contrary, be destroyed by the British, so as to get rid of them for ever."

† P. 595

†† *Loc. Cit.* p. 309 f. n.

§ In a notification dated 25th December, 1845, the Governor-General called upon the troops to render acknowledgment to God, and the Calcutta Christian authorities subsequently circulated a form of thanksgiving.

§§ P. 311 *f. n.*

desertion from the Sikh ranks, with the assurance of presents, rewards and future pensions *and the immediate decision of any lawsuits in which the deserters might be engaged in the British provinces.*"

In that battle of Ferozesha many eminent English officers and soldiers met with death, including that adept in occidental diplomacy Major Broadfoot.

The news of the disasters which befell the British began to be circulated all over the country. William Edwards writes that

"Rumours of the most alarming and disastrous character now began to circulate. It was reported that both the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief had been killed, our army annihilated, and the Sikhs in full march on Delhi."†

It was feared that the protected Cis-Satlaj Sikh States would rise against the English and throw in their lot with the Khalsa soldiers. Patiala was the most important Cis-Satlaj Sikh State. It was necessary for the English to intrigue with the ruler of that state in order to prevent him from joining the Sikhs. William Edwards was sent to that state to play the part of an occidental diplomatist. He writes that he received.

"the Governor-General's instructions to proceed instantly to Puttialah to install the young Maharajah on the throne, in the place of his father, who had suddenly and mysteriously died, it was feared by poison, on account of his steady adherence to British interests.

"The principality of Puttialah was in consequence of this Chief's death in a very excited and disturbed state and it was considered of the greatest importance to secure the fidelity of his son and successor, as, should the state become hostile to us, the main army's communication with its rear, which passed chiefly through Puttialah territory, would be cut off, and the results might be very disastrous. I was instructed, therefore, to use my best endeavours to induce the young Chief to continue to follow his father's example, and with his subjects remain faithful to British interests."††

With specious promises and other means so characteristic of occidental diplomacy, Edwards succeeded remarkably in his mission to Patiala.§

Two more battles - of Aliwal §§ and Subraon—were fought before the English could force their passage across the Satlaj and enter the Sikh territory and proceed to Lahore. But owing to treason the Sikhs were defeated in both the battles. That

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* *"Reminiscences of a Bengal Civilian"* (p. 84)

† *Loc. Cit.*

†† *Ibid.*, p. 87.

§ "I added that although I was not authorized to say so, I felt confident that if the Maharajah and his people remained steadfast to our interests, his Highness would be rewarded by the enlargement of his territory, and by the bestowal upon him of some of the lands which would become British territory on the successful termination of the war. Finally, I said that I would take upon myself to promise, on the part of the Government, that if the Maharajah aided us by forwarding supplies, and keeping open our communications with the rear—that the present salute to which his Highness was entitled would be increased in future to such a number of guns as would not only raise his rank above all other Chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej States, his former compeers, but place him at once on a level with the great and ancient Rajas of Hindustan." (pp. 92-93).

§§ "It has been said that the descriptions of the Peninsular battles received additional grandeur from the spirit-stirring pen of the narrator, that many who witnessed them could scarcely

of Subraon was altogether a shameful affair, for the English won the victory by the sacrifice of all sense of honor, honesty, conscience and humanity. To quote Cunningham again :

"The first object was to drive the Sikhs across the Sutlej by force of arms, or to have them withdrawn to their own side of the river by the unconditional submission of the chiefs and delegates of the army ; for, until that were done, no progress could be said to have been made in the war, and every petty chief in Hindustan would have silently prepared for asserting his independence, or for enlarging his territory on the first opportunity...The English therefore, intimated to Gulab Singh their readiness to acknowledge a Sikh sovereignty in Lahore after the army should have been disbanded ; but the Raja declared his inability to deal with the troops,...the views of either party were in some sort met by an understanding that the Sikh army should be attacked by the English, and that when beaten it should be openly abandoned by its own Government and further, that the passage of the Sutlej should be unopposed and the road to the capital laid open to the victors. Under such circumstances of discreet policy and shameless treason was the battle of Subraon fought."*

Even William Edwards writes that, when the Governor-General was at Ferozepur,

"emissaries from Rajah Lall Singh† arrived and gave us valuable information respecting the enemy's position...The Sikhs made a gallant and desperate resistance, but were driven towards the river and their bridge of boats, which, as soon as the action had become general, their leaders, Raja Lall Singh and Tej Sing, had by previous consent, broken down, taking the precaution first to retire across it themselves."...§

The battle of Subraon resembled the "battue" practised in Western Christian countries. The Sikhs were the game of British officers and men. No humanity was

recognise them when dressed in the glowing language of the soldier-historian. Much has been said of Aliwal, but candid witnesses give a far different account from that written at the time.

"I wandered over the field with one who had been present at the engagement ; he assured me, and his testimony has been corroborated by many others, that a fruitful imagination was at work when the official account was drawn up. His words were : "Aliwal was the *battle of the despatch*, for none of us knew we had fought a battle until the particulars appeared in a document, which did *more* than justice to every one concerned.

"But the public gulped it down, and like many of our Indian battles and Indian blunders, the final issue of the struggle disarmed criticism.

"As an Irishman would say, 'we gained a disadvantage at Budiwal, by the baggage of the army falling into the hands of the enemy ; *that* no exaggeration could well turn into a victory ; but shortly afterwards, a few shots, and the charge of a squadron or two in pursuit of a host of retreating Sikhs, were magnified into a grand combat, and thus the plain of Aliwal has been recorded as the scene of one of India's Marathons."—*Wanderings of a Naturalist in India* by Andrew Leith Adams, M. D., Surgeon, 22nd Regiment. Edinburgh : Edmonston and Douglas, 1867.

* P. 324.

† Both Lord Hardinge and Sir Henry Lawrence denied that they had anything to do with Lal Singh and Tej Singh before the first Sikh war. In his memoir of Sir H. Lawrence, Kaye writes :

"If this was done, it was strange, indeed, that neither Lord Hardinge nor Sir Henry Lawrence knew anything about it. Both were men of the highest honour ; and I cannot believe that either told me an untruth." (Lives of Indian Officers, vol. II, p. 293).

There is little doubt now, that both the above named officers told despicable lies when they denied that the battles of Mudki, Subraon, Aliwal and Ferozshah were not bought off by bribing Lal Singh and Tej Sing.

§ Pp. 99-100.

shown to the Sikhs, who were wantonly and cruelly massacred. Writes Cunningham:

"the enemy was pressed towards the scarcely fordable river; yet, although assailed on either side by squadrons of horse and battalions of foot, no sikh offered to submit, and no disciple of Govind asked for quarter...But the warlike rage, or the calculating policy of the leaders, had yet to be satisfied, and standing with the slain heaped on all sides around them, they urged troops of artillery almost into the waters of the Sutlej to more thoroughly destroy the army which had so long scorned their power. No deity of heroic fable received the living within the oozy gulphs of the oppressed stream and its current was choked with the added numbers of the dead and crimsoned with the blood of a fugitive multitude."

"Such is the lust of never dying fame. But vengeance was complete; the troops, defiled with dust and smoke and carnage, stood mute indeed for a moment, until the glory of their success rushing upon their minds, they gave expression to their feelings, and hailed their victorious commanders with reiterated shouts of triumph and congratulation."*

William Edwards has also described the manner in which the faithful Khalsa soldiers were betrayed by Raja Gulab Singh. He writes:

"When the Sikhs were defeated at Moodkee, Ferozeshuhur and Allewal, the army lost all confidence in Rajahs Lall, Tej Singh, and their other leaders, whom they accused of conspiring with the British Government for their destruction, and invited Gulab Singh to place himself at their head. The Rajah promised compliance, and arrived in due time at Lahore with a large body of his own hill troops, in whom he could place implicit reliance. He persuaded the Durbar to allow him to garrison the fortress at Lahore with these men, while the Sikhs then occupying it were ordered to proceed to join their brethren on the Sutlej...Gulab urged the army not to attempt attacking the British until he joined them, and this he evaded doing on one pretext or another, knowing full well that in due time the British would attack and capture the position at Subraon."†

Charles Viscount Hardinge, the eldest son and private secretary in India of the then Governor-General by whose order or connivance the brave Sikhs who fought for their faith and their land of birth were cruelly dealt with, defends the inhumane conduct of those officers and men who were his coreligionists and compatriots. He says:

"It may be asked why such indiscriminate destruction was dealt out to so gallant a foe. The men's passions were roused. ..The men vowed vengeance, and inflicted it. Moreover, had not the Khalsa army been annihilated at Subraon, they would have rallied again and protracted a contest north of the river, which it was desirable on the grounds of humanity should, if possible, be brought to a close."§

Amongst the faithful soldiers of the Khalsa who died on the battlefield of Subraon fighting for their faith and commonwealth should be mentioned the name of Sham Singh of Atari. Writes Cunningham:

"But the ancient Sham Singh remembered his vow; he clothed himself in simple white attire, as one devoted to death, and calling on all around him to fight for the Gooroo, who had promised everlasting bliss to the brave he repeatedly rallied shattered ranks, and at last fell a martyr on a heap of his slain countrymen."**

* P. 328.

† P. 104.

§ P. 119 of the Monograph on Hardinge in the Rulers of India Series.

** (P. 327.)

The four battles on the Satlaj brought the First Sikh War to a close. The army raised by the genius of Ranjit Singh and for whose efficiency he spared no pains and no expenses, if not altogether annihilated, was mostly destroyed. Of the captured Sikh guns, the Governor-General wrote :

"We have now taken in battle 220 pieces of artillery, of which 80 pieces exceed in calibre anything known in European warfare. The weight of the Sikh gun in proportion to its calibre is much heavier than ours, and the range of the six-pounder is longer. The recoil on the carriage is less, and their guns do not heat so rapidly as ours in firing."

Had Ranjit Singh engaged in war with the English, the contest would have most probably resulted in his favor. With his brave soldiers, with his excellent guns, it is a wonder why he did not fight the English. The sack of Delhi was a day-dream with the Sikhs, and the Khalsa soldiers would have most enthusiastically followed his lead had he chosen to lead them to the invasion of the British territories. But then Ranjit Singh was no statesman and, illiterate as he was, he could not form any conception of the ruin he was bringing down on his Raj when he hugged the British to his breast and did exactly as they desired him to do.

CHAPTER LXXXI

THE SIKH RAJ LOSES ITS INDEPENDENCE

After the battle of Subraon, when the British treated their Sikh opponents in the most inhuman manner possible, Hardinge lost no time in crossing the Satlaj, and marched towards Lahore. William Edwards writes :

"In the afternoon of the 10th, when the action was completely over, and not a Sikh remained on our side of the river, the Governor-General returned to his camp at Ferozepore. That night when writing letters from his dictation in his tent. I remember in reply to some earnest remonstrance against the supposed folly and rashness of crossing our army at once into the Punjab, his lordship saying, 'Depend upon it I am right, for the safest and the wisest course, when you have knocked the wind out of your enemy, is to go right at his heart at once before he has time to recover.' "*

Writes Charles Viscount Hardinge in the biographical sketch of his father,

"At 1 p. m. the battle of Sobraon was over. At 1. 30 Colonel Wood, hardly recovered from his wound, was riding off to Sir J. Grey's Division at Harnku to order him] to prepare for crossing the river immediately ; he then rode on to Firozpur, twenty-five miles from head-quarters, to deliver the the same order, and at 5 p. m. returned half-way to meet the Governor-General. On the 13th February, the whole army had crossed, with the exception of three brigades. On the 12th. the Governor-General himself with his staff crossed the bridge of boats. Abbott and Napier (afterwards Lord Napier of Magdala) both superintended the operation."†

That adept in occidental diplomacy, Broadfoot, was killed in the campaign. His diplomatic skill and intriguing nature succeeded in bringing about the war with the Sikhs. Had he been alive, he would have been conspicuous in this march on Lahore. But his place was taken by Major [afterwards well known as Sir Henry] Lawrence. This officer was as great an adept as his predecessor in the craft of occidental diplomacy. He carried on the negotiations and intrigues with the Lahore authorities which ended in the two Lahore treaties to be referred to presently.

That treacherous Rajput chief, Raja Gulab Singh, had managed affairs so adroitly that the British marched on in the land of the Sikhs quite unmolested and without being fired on by the enemy. Hardinge also was not in a mood to fight.

The Sikh soldiers were not such a 'rabble' as they had been misrepresented by the English diplomatists. Although they had been defeated on the battlefields of Mudki, Firozsha and Sobraon, no blame attached to them for those defeats. They had been betrayed by their leaders, and it was the British who should have been ashamed of their conduct; for they who pray every day, "lead us not into temptations,

* P. 101 of the Reminiscences of a Bengal Civilian.

† Lord Hardinge (Rulers of India Series), p. 122.

but deliver us from all evils," led the non-Christian chiefs into temptations. Those chiefs, being Asiatics, in the simplicity of their hearts could not fathom the depth of duplicity, want of scruples and hypocrisy of the occidental diplomatists and were thus made instruments for the destruction of the independent existence of the Sikh Raj.

Hardinge considered it advisable to conclude peace with the Lahore Darbar. The Governor-General knew the annexation of the whole dominion of Ranjit was impossible. Writes William Edwards:

"Annexation of the country was, with the force at our disposal, perfectly out of the question, had it been in other respects politic or desirable. This, in Lord Hardinge's opinion, it could not be, as the Punjab would never, he felt assured, repay the cost of its administration, and that of the large force which would be required to garrison it, and which being no longer available for the protection of our old territory, would have to be replaced by fresh masses of troops."*

Gulab Singh tried to persuade the Governor-General not to advance to Lahore. But the Governor-General did not act on the advice proffered by that traitor. In his "Reminiscences" (pp. 105-112), Edwards has given a graphic account of the march of Hardinge to Lahore.

The first treaty of Lahore was concluded in March, 1846. By it the Sikh Raj not only lost its independence, but was shorn of some of its most valued possessions. But the ink on the treaty was hardly dry when a second one was forced on the Lahore Darbar. Perhaps the Governor-General was now prepared to annex the whole of the Panjab. But some pretext was necessary to lend the color of justification to his Machiavellian scheme. This was easily found in the conduct of the Lahore Darbar, at the head of which was Lal Singh. He had betrayed his own co-religionists and played into the hands of the Christians, from whom of course he expected some rewards. But when he found that Gulab Singh was rewarded for his treachery to the Sikhs with Kashmir, he cursed the British for their ingratitude to him.

Under these circumstances it is not improbable that he intrigued with the Muhammadan Governor of Kashmir to prevent its transfer to Gulab Singh. Writes Charles Viscount Hardinge in the biographical sketch of his father:

"The Shaikh Imam-ud-din, not without the connivance of Lal Singh and possibly other members of the Sikh Durbar, at last openly refused to carry out that clause of the treaty of Lahore by which Kashmir was to be transferred to Gulab Singh. Without an hour's hesitation the Governor-General declared that the Treaty must be enforced by British troops.... But the Shaikh, who had at his disposal not more than 8000 or 9000 men, saw at once that his cause was hopeless. He hurried down to tender his submission in person, and proceeded to make disclosures which involved Lal Singh in his downfall... The Kashmir insurrection and the treachery of Lal Singh led to a revision of that Treaty of Lahore, in a direction which the Governor-General had for some time been contemplating. In a despatch to the secret committee, dated from Simla, September 10th, 1846, after discussing the advisability of continuing the occupation of Lahore by British troops, he added:

"The other course which it may be open to the British Government to take, and which has

* (Pp. 105-106).

constantly occupied my attention, would be to carry on the Government of Lahore in the name of the Maharaja during his minority, a period of about eight years, placing a British Minister at the head of the Government assisted by a Native Council...Accordingly, a new Treaty was signed. The Rani was excluded from all power, receiving a pension of £15,000 a year. A Council of Regency, consisting of eight Sardars, was appointed during the minority of Dhulip Singh ; and it was stipulated that they should act under the control and guidance of the British Resident'."*

The measures adopted by the Governor-General in forcing the second treaty on the Lahore Darbar were well calculated to try the patience of the Sikhs. Perhaps it was his intention to provoke them to further hostilities in order to reduce the rest of the dominion of Ranjit Singh into a British territory. If such were his intentions he succeeded admirably. But the Second Sikh War did not take place during the period he held the office of Governor-General in India. So the consequences of the second treaty of Lahore need not be discussed here.

* P 147

CHAPTER LXXXII

HARDINGE'S TREATMENT OF RAJA PRATAP SING

The deposed Raja of Satara, Pratap Sing, was kept a prisoner at Benares. His keeper was Major Carpenter. The Raja wrote a letter to Hardinge protesting his innocence. In forwarding this letter, Carpenter, who believed in the innocence of that descendant of Shivaji, wrote that the Raja was in a position to prove his innocence. This was so unpalatable to the Governor-General, that he severely reprimanded him for expressing his views. Regarding Major Carpenter's letter to the Governor-General Ludlow writes that

"by this letter,—for the like of which, in the case of any ordinary felon, any governor of a gaol in England would be thanked by the Home Secretary, Major Carpenter only earned to himself a rebuke from Lord Hardinge. His declaration of his belief in the Raja's innocence was termed 'unbecoming and uncalled for'. No inquiry was instituted as to the new evidence which the Raja offered to bring forth. The Raja's wife had already fallen a victim to the climate of Benares. His own health was sinking fast. In spite of Major Carpenter's warning on the subject, he was left to die. He did die, in October, 1847,—protesting to the last that he was innocent, offering to prove his innocence. With this evil deed Lord Hardinge's name is inseparably connected."*

(Lord Hardinge's treatment of the Raja of Satara is described in detail in my *Story of Satara.*)

For reducing the independent existence of the Sikh Raj, Sir Henry Hardinge was very handsomely rewarded. He was raised to the peerage and made a Viscount. The East India Company, generous with other people's money, voted a pension of £3000 a year to him out of Indian revenues.

But Hardinge was not content with the extinction of the independence of the Sikh Raj. As he was continuing the policy of his predecessor, Ellenborough, he like him naturally had his eyes directed to Nepal and Oudh.

It is a fact that ever since the forcing of a British Resident on Nepal that country has been the scene of domestic feuds and bloodshed and murders†

"The Nepalese have a proverb somewhat to the effect that with the merchant comes the musket and with the Bible comes the bayonet."§

We suspect that the British Residents at Nepal with their craft of occidental diplomacy used to succeed in creating these disorders. Their policy was to weaken Nepal and then to annihilate its independence. One of these disorders took place during the Governor-Generalship of Hardinge, which must have gladdened the heart of his lordship very much. Says his son:

"This ghastly story of intrigue and massacre in Nepal must sound almost incredible to the present

* (*British India,* Vol. II, p. 154).

† Wright's *History of Nepal,* p. 54.

§ *Ibid.,* p. 68.

generation, . . . To us at the time in India it recalled the bulletins of similar proceedings which we had been accustomed to receive from Lahore before the Sikh invasion."*

Hardinge also proceeded to Oudh "to warn" the King. The "game" was perhaps not yet ripe and so Oudh was not yet made a portion of the British territory.

The foreign policy of Hardinge was aggressive. He found little time to devote to the internal affairs of India. So during his tenure of office, no substantial reform in the administration of the country was carried out.

Hardinge professed to be a very zealous Christian. In the *Calcutta Review* (p. 529, Vol. VIII) it is stated that

"By his own example encouraging the observance of the Christian Religion. . . The notification of October, 1846 prohibiting Sunday labor is evidence of Lord Hardinge's sincerity ; and will be long remembered to his honor. The Moslem and the Hindu, who worship after their own fashion, have now some proof that the Christian respects the faith he professes."

He took great interest in the services manned by his co-religionists and compatriots.

The European soldier's kit, by a General Order of February 1846, is now carried at the public expense : the Sanitarium at Dugshae and the Barrack for European Artillery at Subathu are the work of Lord Hardinge." (*Ibid.* p. 535).

When a change in the Ministry in England occured in 1847, he resigned the post of Governor-General, to which office Lord Dalhousie was appointed. He left the shores of India on the 18th of January, 1848, with Sir Henry Lawrence and his personal staff.

* *Loc. Cit.,* p. 156.

CHAPTER LXXXIII

LORD DALHOUSIE'S ADMINISTRATION

The native of Scotland bearing the surname of Ramsay but better known as Lord Dalhousie, was the last maker of the British Indian Empire proper, for after him no other portion of India has been dyed red.

This Scotch nobleman was unscrupulous in the extreme, and he believed, as an occidental diplomatist and follower of Machiavelli that the end justifies the means. But perhaps he is not so much to be blamed as his masters, whose faithful though unscrupulous servant he was. One of his successors in the Governor-Generalship of India—a compatriot of his enjoying the name of Earl Elgin, did not hesitate to declare from his place in the Supreme Legislative Council of India that the representative of the Sovereign of England in India has no policy of his own but has to act upon the 'mandate' he receives from the Secretary of State for India. Elgin was not a perfect adept in occidental diplomacy of the school of Machiavelli and Talleyrand and so he blurted out a state secret.

If we remember this theory of the 'mandate,' we shall be able to understand the land grabbing policy of the period during which Dalhousie was the Governor-General of this country.

He was not the originator of that policy, he merely gave effect to it. It was the policy of that party of English politicians of which Macaulay and Lansdowne, Cobden and Bright, were the most prominent members* as is evident from Major General Briggs' letter to Major Evans Bell, dated 8th May, 1872, quoted on a previous page.

Unfortunately for India, the man charged with the portfolio of Indian affairs during Lord Dalhousie's Governor-Generalship was an ex-convict and an unscrupulous politician who, before being ennobled as Lord Boughton, was known as Sir John Hobhouse. Regarding Hobhouse's antecedents, it is recorded by an English historian that he was "a man of ability but wanting in discretion, who had once been imprisoned for breach of privilege."†

Such was the man chosen to be entrusted with the Indian affairs and it is no wonder that, unscrupulous as he was, he felt no compunction of conscience in inflicting miseries on the royal houses and peoples of India.

The annexations of the different independent states and territories of India during the regime of Dalhousie were brought about by means of show of force, bad faith, by the violation of all treaties, and fraud and chicanery.

Two provinces—one in the West, that is the Panjab, another in the East, that is

* (*Memoir of General John Briggs*, p. 273).

† (Keene's *History of India*, Vol. II, p. 153, footnote 1st Edition of 1893.

Hobhouse was also Dalhousie's uncle (Sir William Napier's *Life of Sir Charles Napier*, Vol. IV, p. 293).

Pegu—were brought under the jurisdiction of England by the show of force, that is, war. Although not in chronological order, we shall deal with these two wars first.

THE SECOND SIKH WAR

Political and financial considerations rendered it impossible for Hardinge to annex the whole of the Panjab after the First Sikh War. So after having shorn the Sikh Raj of some of its most important provinces and having imposed a very heavy war indemnity on the Lahore Darbar, to make virtue out of necessity, the Governor-General of India showed his magnanimity by leaving Dalip Singh as the ruler of a portion of the Panjab. But Dalip Singh was not recognized as an independent sovereign. No, the territory of which he was the nominal ruler was reduced to the condition of a Feudatory State. The second treaty which was forced on the Lahore Durbar was obviously intended to irritate the people of the Panjab and provoke them to hostilities. That was the policy which guided the occidental diplomatists charged with the affairs of the Panjab.

After the First Sikh War, Sir Henry Lawrence was the Resident appointed at the Lahore Darbar. Although an adept in occidental diplomacy, yet he kept up the appearances of being a very pious Christian. So it is probable that had he remained some considerable time at Lahore after the conclusion of the Second Treaty forced on the Lahore Darbar, the existence of the feudatory Sikh Raj would have been prolonged for some time longer.* But he left Lahore and was a fellow passenger in the same ship which carried away Lord Hardinge from the shores of India.

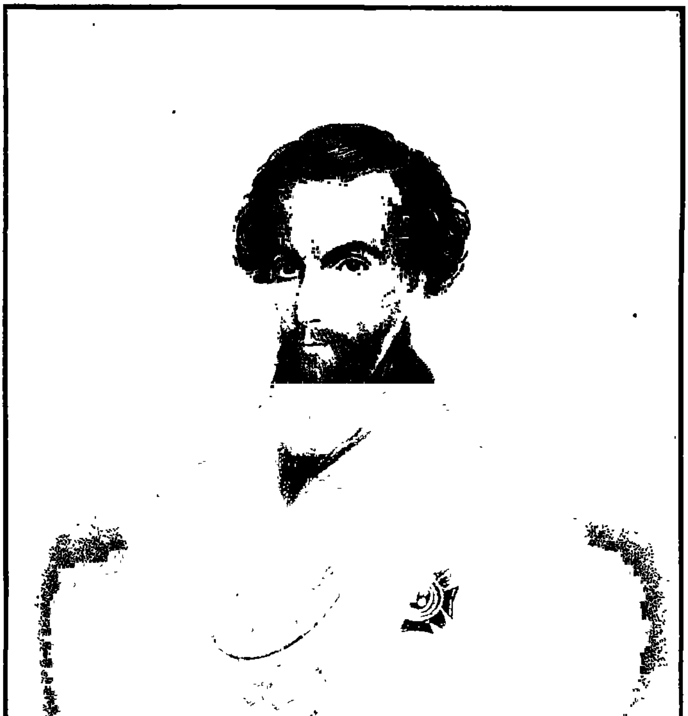
His brother Sir John (afterwards well-known as Lord) Lawrence was appointed to officiate for him. But he was not long in charge of the Lahore affairs. Sir Frederick Currie was appointed Resident at Lahore.† A worse selection for that post could not have been made. No doubt Sir Frederick was an able man and well versed in the craft of occidental diplomacy. But he had his pronounced views regarding the the Sikh Raj. Before the First Sikh War had taken place, he wrote to Broadfoot, a letter dated Calcutta, January 19, 1845, which has already been printed on a previous page.

* In his letter of the 29th April 1847, Sir Henry Lawrence as Resident of Lahore wrote to Lord Hardinge ;-

"The national independence of the Sikh character may dictate the attempt to escape from under foreign yoke ; for however benevolent be our motives and conciliating demeanour, a British army can not garrison Lahore, and the fiat of a British functionary can not supersede that of the Durbar throughout the land, without our presence being considered a burden and a yoke."

† Dr. George Buist in his Annals of India for the year 1848 (p. 3.) writes :

"Fully in the confidence of Lord Hardinge, and understood to be the adviser or advocate of many of the ablest of his measures, he was appointed Resident at Lahore during the absence of Colonel Lawrence, as not only eminently qualified for the office by natural talent and perfect familiarity with the whole system of the policy desired to be pursued, but as being able to vacate the Residency on the return of the late Resident, and resume his seat at the Council Board without upsetting any arrangement or interfering with the plans or prospects of any one."



Sir Henry Lawrence

From the appointment of this man there can be no doubt that the Indian authorities intended to provoke hostilities and thus to hasten the annexation of the Panjab, an object which was so dear to their hearts. But before describing the steps taken by Currie which were the proximate causes of the Second Sikh War, it is necessary to refer to some of the proceedings of the British Government ever since the forcing of the Second Treaty on the Lahore Darbar by Hardinge towards the close of the year 1846. The Panjab was not only reduced to the unenviable position of a Feudatory State, but the members of the Sikh aristocracy of that land found themselves sold bound hand and foot to the tender mercies of the English. The occupation of the aristocracy was gone, and into every situation of honor and trust, an undesirable and unsympathetic alien of the Christian persuasion was thrust. Of course this was bound to irritate and try the patience of the self-respecting members of the Sikh aristocracy. Colonel Sir Henry Sleeman, the successful thief and thug catcher—and as perfect an adept in occidental diplomacy as it was possible for any follower of Machiavelli to be, knew very well the consequences that were sure to result from the policy which his compatriots were pursuing in the Panjab. He expressed his views on the subject so clearly in some of his letters to his friends that the following lengthy extracts from them are given below :

To the Hon. Sir T. H. Maddock

Jhansee, 18th May, 1848.

My dear Maddock,

Things are not going so well as could be wished in the Punjab ; and it appears to me that we have been there committing an error of the same kind that we committed in Afghanistan—that is, taking upon ourselves the most odious part of the executive administration. In such a situation this should have been avoided, if possible. There is a kind of *chivalry* in this—if there is anything odious to be done, or repugnant to the feelings of the people, a young Englishman thinks he must do it himself, lest he should be thought disposed to shift off a painful burthen upon others ; and he thinks it unbecoming of us to pay any regard to popular feeling. Of course, also the officers of the Sikh State are glad to get rid of such burthens while they see English gentlemen ready to carry them. Now, it strikes me that we might, with a little tact, have altered all this, and retained the good feelings of the people, by throwing the executive upon the officers of the Sikh State, and remaining ourselves in the dignified position of Appellate Courts for the redress of grievances inflicted by these officers in neglect of duty or abuse of authority. Our duty would have been to guide, control, and check, and the head of all might have been like the sovereign of England—known only by his acts of grace.

By keeping in this dignified position we should not only have retained the good feelings of the people, but we should have been teaching the Sikh officers their administrative duties till the time comes for making over the country ; and the chiefs and Court would have found the task, made over to them under such a system, more easy to sustain. In Afghanistan we did the reverse of all this, and became intolerably odious to the mass of the people ; for they saw that everything that was harsh was done by us, and the officers of the King were disposed to confirm and increase this impression because they were not employed. The people of the Punjab are not such fanatics, and they are more divided in creed and caste, while they see no ranges of snowy mountains, barren rocks and difficult passes between us and our reinforcements and resources ; but it seems clear that there is a good deal of excitement and bad feeling growing up amongst them that may be very

mischievous. All the newspapers, English and native, make the administration appear to be altogether English—it is Captain This and Mr. That, who do, or are expected to do, everything; and all over the country the native chiefs will think, that the leaving the country to the management of the Sirdars was a mere mockery and delusion.

We should keep our hands as much as possible out of the harsh and dirty part of the executive work, that the European officers may be looked up to with respect as the effectual check upon the native administrators; always prepared to check any disposition on their part to neglect their duty or abuse their power, and thereby bring their Government into disrepute. Of course, the outrage at Mooltan must be avenged, and our authority there established; but, when this is done, Currie should be advised to avoid the rock upon which our friend Macnaghten was wrecked. We are too impatient to jump down the throats of those who venture to look us in the face, and to force upon them our modes of doing the work of the country, and superintend the doing it ourselves in all its details, or having it done by creatures of our own, commonly ten times more odious to the people than we are ourselves.

Ever yours sincerely
W. H. Sleeman

To Lt.-General the Right Hon. Henry Viscount Hardinge.

Jhansee, 15th, August, 1848,

My Lord,

* * * *

It was, I think, your Lordship's intention that in the Lahore state, we should guide, direct and supervise the administration, but not take all the executive upon ourselves, to the exclusion of all the old native aristocracy, as we had done in Afghanistan. This policy has not, I am afraid, been adhered to sufficiently; and we have, probably, less of the sympathy and cordial goodwill of the higher and middle classes than we should otherwise have had. But I am too far from the scene to be a fair judge in such matters.

The policy of interposing Hindoo native states between us and the beggarly fanatical countries to the north-west no wise man can, I think, doubt; for, however averse our Government may be to encroach and creep on, it would be drawn on by the intermeddling dispositions and vain-glory of local authorities; and every step would be ruinous, and lead to another still more ruinous. With the Hindoo principalities on our border we shall do very well, and trust that we shall long be able to maintain them in the state required for their own interests and ours.

* * * *

Believe me, with great respect,
Your Lordship's obedient, humble servant
W. H. Sleeman†

It is said that had the Multan affair been properly settled, there would not have been the Second Sikh War and subsequent annexation of the Panjab. The province of Multan was annexed to the Sikh Raj by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1818 and it was farmed out to Dewan Sawan Mall, who was appointed its Governor.§ On his

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* *A Journey through the Kingdom of Oude in 1849-1850. Vol. I Private correspondence, Pp. XXXIV-XXXVI.*

† *Ibid.*

§ The physical improvement of the province effected by Sawan Mall has been borne testimony to by the Board of Administration of the Punjab in their first report for the years 1849-50 and 1850-51 upon that province. The Board wrote :

"When Sawun Mull was entrusted with the viceroyalty of the country, a large portion of it was little better than a desert; war, rapine, and general insecurity had decimated a population,

death his son Dewan Mulraj became the Governor of that province. The Governor of Multan was more or less independent of the Sikh Raj. All that he was required to do was the regular payment of the tribute to the Sikh Government of Lahore. Thus he was a renter under the Sikh Government. The revenue of Multan was 35 lakhs of rupees a year and the amount which was paid to the Lahore Treasury was seventeen lakhs and a half during the Governorship of Dewan Sawan Mall. But after the death of that Governor, Lal Singh on behalf of the Sikh Raj demanded an immense *Nazarana* (feudal fine) from his successor Mulraj. The amount of *Nazarana* was afterwards commuted to one of eighteen lakhs, which Mulraj agreed to pay within a certain time. But Mulraj did not pay any portion of the promised amount, for there was no regular Government at Lahore. He took advantage of the disorder and disorganization in which the Panjab was involved during the period which preceded the First Sikh War. On the reduction of the Sikh Panjab to the position of a feudatory state of the British, the claim was renewed and troops under the command of Lal Singh's brother, Bhagwan Singh, were sent to coerce Mulraj. The troops were defeated.

One of the districts, that of Junnak, however, was wrested from the Dewan and conferred on Bhagwan Singh.

Dr. Buist, on the authority of the *Delhi Gazette*, writes :

"Dewan Moolraj was subsequently summoned to Lahore personally to settle his accounts, and came to the capital on the guarantee of the British officers, having good reason to believe himself the object of a scheme to take his life. During his visit to Lahore a settlement of a very favorable nature to him was made, and he was again confirmed in the government of Multan. On the downfall of Lall Sing, and the execution of the second or minority treaty, which placed the whole of the Punjab at the disposal of the British Indian Government, the rights of Dewan Moolraj, so recently tacitly confirmed by Lord Hardinge, were respected. It appearing, however, subsequently, that it would be highly desirable to place the whole of the Kingdom of Dhuleep Singh on one and the same footing as to the settlement, &c., negotiations were, as we have every reason to believe, set on foot, to induce Dewan Moolraj to resign his charge,—he receiving, we presume, a fair equivalent for the loss entailed.*

The above differs somewhat from the accepted official version, which makes Mulraj as anxious to resign his post as Governor of Multan. Sir George Lawrence, a brother of Sir Henry and Sir John Lawrence, writes, in his *Forty-three Years in India*:

On the downfall of the Regency and the appointment of a British resident, Dewan Moolraj was confirmed in his Government. Suddenly in November, 1847, the Dewan re-visited Lahore and communicated to my brother John, the acting Resident, his desire to resign the Government of his province. My brother endeavoured to dissuade him from the step, but Moolraj persisted in his determination, requesting my brother to keep his resignation a profound secret from the Durbar, to which my brother consented."†

which for a long period, perhaps for more than a century, had not been numerous. He dug canals, and induced the people from neighbouring states to settle under his auspices. . . . .In the progress of years, tracts, for which Sawun Mull paid a trifle, yielded a large revenue." Pp. 89-90.

* *Annals of India*, 1848, p. 5.

† P. 241.

It seems that the lot of Mulraj was made so hard and unbearable as to compel him to resign his charge. He had been made to surrender one district yielding an annual revenue of eight lakhs and to add two lakhs to his annual payment to the Durbar. Mr. (afterwards Sir H. M.) Elliot in his Note on the Revenues and Resources of the Punjab" dated 1st December, 1847, wrote that "the revenue which it (Multan) actually yields to Diwan Mulraj shows that his tribute is a very light one."* According to the statement furnished by the officiating Resident in November, 1846, the total amount of the revenue of Multan as at that time constituted was Rs. 36,83,555.

"The arrangement with Diwan Mulraj is to last for only three years, of which one has already expired. If it be our policy to increase the revenues of the Durbar at the expense of the Diwan when this term expires, a question which deserves grave consideration, it is evident that an increase may very reasonably be demanded by which the tribute may be raised at a first renewal of the lease to Rs. 25,00,000 and at a second to Rs 30,00,000." **

At the time when Elliot indited his note, Multan used to pay to the Lahore Darbar Rs. 19,71,500.† Notwithstanding Mr. Elliot's statement that Mulraj's "tribute is a very light one," there can be no doubt that the Governor of Multan did not feel it so; otherwise at the end of one year of the above arrangement, that is in November, 1847, he would not have suddenly revisited Lahore and communicated to John Lawrence his desire to resign the government of his province. No, he must have also got an inkling of the determination of the British Government to increase his tribute from Rs. 19,71,500 to 25 or even Rs. 30,00,000.

John Lawrence persuaded Mulraj to reconsider his desire to resign. The latter returned to Multan and it was understood that he would retain his government for another year.

But before the expiry of one year John Lawrence was succeeded in the Residency at Lahore by Sir Frederick Currie. The new resident was perhaps a far greater adept in occidental diplomacy than any one of his predecessors. And as said before, he was perhaps appointed to the Residency at Lahore to provoke the Sikhs to hostilities and thus hasten the annexation of the Panjab. His pronounced views regarding Dalip Singh and the Sikh Government have already been quoted before.

Currie on his arrival at Lahore sought a quarrel with Mulraj. Sir George Lawrence admits that his brother John consented to keep Mulraj's resignation a profound secret from the Darbar. But Currie would not and did not keep it so, because he said that the Dewan's "resignation, so far from being a secret, was talked of in the bazars, and he had heard of it at Agra on his way to Lahore."§

In all probability there was no truth whatever in what Currie said as to Mulraj's resignation being talked of in the bazars, and if it was so, no one in his senses could or would have charged Mulraj with having made the secret a public property. Does it not stand to reason that the occidental diplomatists themselves betrayed the

* P. 40.

** *Ibid.*, p. 41.

† *Ibid.*, p. 33.

§ Sir George Lawrence's *Forty-three years in India*, p. 242.

confidence reposed in them by Mulraj and divulged the secret in order to gain their object ?

Of course, everything was being done to make Mulraj disgusted with his position as Governor of Multan and induce him to resign. The British Indian Government were determined to introduce into Multan that system of administration which was prevalent in the North-Western Provinces. In his "Note on the Revenues and Resources of the Punjab" to which reference has already been made above, Mr. Elliot wrote regarding Multan:

"This province has been compared to the entire Benares Division together with three districts of Allahabad and, therefore, would require for its Civil control

2 Commissioners.
7 Judges.
9 Collectors,"*

Of course all these functionaries were to be natives of England over whom Mulraj as Governor of Multan would have no control, or rather he was to be dictated to, insulted and domineered over by them in every manner possible. A self-respecting and spirited man like Mulraj could not suffer such an arrangement taking place in the province which he and his father had ruled for more than a quarter of a century in a manner highly creditable to themselves and beneficial to their subjects.

Mr. Marshman wrote in the *Calcutta Review* for December, 1843, p. 241 :

"Mulraj himself had always been regarded by the British authorities, and particularly by Mr. John Lawrence, as a fair specimen of an Asiatic ruler ; and Mr. Agnew remarked, on his arrival, that the quiet aspect of Multan had not belied the accounts which he had heard of its excellent order and arrangement."

Of course the people of Multan were contented, happy and prosperous under their own system of government. But the occidental diplomatists of Christian persuasion had to provide for their own kith and kin and therefore they would not tolerate the existence of Mulraj. Under the governorship of Mulraj and his father, Multan had become so rich that those Britishers, descended from the old sea-king robbers, could not resist the temptation of appropriating its wealth for themselves and they thought they could squeeze out more from it by oppressing its inhabitants than did Mulraj or his father. Elliot wrote :

"Under our management we might add 5,00,000 more for Mooltan."*

So Multan was marked out as the first victim. Sir Frederick Currie did not lose any time in negotiating with Mulraj and prevailed on the Lahore Darbar to induce him to resign. His resignation was accepted and one Khan Singh Man was appointed Governor of Multan on an annual salary of Rs. 30,000. He was to be governor in name only, the real authority being vested in the two English officers who accompanied him. He was not to do anything without consulting them. The two English officers were, Mr. Agnew, a Civilian, nominated to the office of Political Agent at Multan, and Lieut. Anderson, chosen as his Assistant.

* (*Loc. cit.*, p. 46).

† *Loc. cit.*, p. 48.

Sir Frederick Currie arrived at Lahore on the 6th of March and within one month of his assuming the duties of the Residency at Lahore the two British officers were deputed to install Khan Singh about the 4th or 5th April, and they arrived at Multan on the 18th. They had an escort of about 350 men. What happened on their arrival at Multan was very fully described in the *Delhi Gazette*, from which the following extract is given below :

"They were received with all apparent frankness and cordiality and on the 19th Moolraj went through the ceremony of handing over the place to them. Agnew placed guards over the gates, and was issuing out of the last about 100 yards behind Anderson, who was riding along with Moolraj. Whilst in the act of mounting his horse a couple of Sowars rode up and cut him down. Khan Singh, who was with him, immediately jumped off his horse and protected him from further injury, mounted him on an elephant, and conveyed him towards the eedgah outside the town, which had been assigned as their residence. They saw no more of Moolraj…Directly they got into the eedgah, the guns of the place opened on them, and continued firing the whole day. The range, however, was too long, and no damage was done, as the building was substantial…On the morning of the 20th, the Mooltanees moved out and surrounded them. Khan Singh, in command of the troops, asked what was to be done? Agnew replied, fight it out to the last ; on which the Sirdar ordered the infantry to reserve their fire until the enemy came close. On these approaching, the whole escort moved out, and went over to them. Agnew on this told the Sirdars to provide for their own safety : this they refused, but drew their swords, and expressed their resolution to stand by the British officers. Agnew had scarcely time to bid Anderson good bye, when the enemy rushed in upon them. Agnew presented his pistol at the first man ; the piece missed fire, but he cut him down when they were immediately both overpowered and put to death…Khan Singh was wounded by a matchlock ball, and bound hand and foot. Sir Fred. Currie received the report, under Agnew's hand, of the state of affairs up to the evening of the 19th and the rest was supplied by native news-writers."*

Mulraj and his followers could not have helped acting otherwise than they did on this occasion. They were animated by the spirit of patriotism and love of liberty and were not going to sell themselves into bondage without resistance to the foreigners. Colonel Sir Henry Sleeman, who possessed very intimate acquaintance with the character and feelings of the natives of India, was perhaps the only Englishman in India in 1848 who was in a position to fully understand the significance and meaning of the Multan disaster. In a letter dated Jhansi, 24th September, 1848, he wrote to Lord Dalhousie :

To the Right Hon. the Earl of Dalhousie.

Jhansi, 24th September, 1848.

My Lord, * * *

I hope your Lordship will pardon my taking advantage of the present occasion to say a few words on the state of affairs in the North-West, which are now of such absorbing interest. I have been for some time impressed with the belief that the system of administration in the Punjab has created doubts as to the ultimate intention of our Government with regard to the restoration of the country to the native ruler when he comes of age. The native aristocracy of the country seen to have satisfied themselves that our object has been to retain the country, and that this could be prevented only by timely resistance. The sending European officers to relieve the chief of Mooltan and to take possession of the country and fort seems to have removed the last lingering doubt upon this point ; and Moolraj seems to have been satisfied that in destroying them he should be acting according to the wishes of all his class, and all that portion of the population who might aspire to the employment under a native rule. This was precisely the impression created by

* Buist's Narrative, p. 6.

precisely the same means in Afghanistan ; and I believe that the notion now, generally prevalent is that our professed intentions of delivering over the country to its native ruler were not honest, and that we should have appropriated the country to ourselves could we have done so.

There are two classes of native Governments in India. In one the military establishments are all national and depend entirely upon the existence of native rule. They are officered by the aristocracy of the country, chiefly landed, who know that they are not fitted for either civil or military office under our system, and must be reduced to beggary or insignificance should our rule be substituted for that of their native Chief. In the other, all the establishments are foreign, like our own. The Sikhs were not altogether of the first class, like those of Rajputana and Bundelkhand, but they were for the most part; and when they saw all offices of trust by degrees being filled by Captain. This and Mr. That they gave up all hopes of ever having their share in the administration.

Satisfied that this was our error in Afghanistan, in carrying out the views of Lord Ellenborough in the Gwalior State, I did everything in my power to avoid it, and have entirely succeeded, I believe ; but it has not been done without great difficulty. I considered Lord Hardinge's measures good, as they interposed Hindu States between us and a beggarly and fanatical country, which it must be ruinous to our finances to retain, and into which we could not avoid making encroachments however anxious the Government might be to avoid it, if our borders joined. But I supposed that we should be content with guiding, controlling, and supervising the native administration, and not take all the executive upon ourselves to the almost entire exclusion of the native aristocracy. I had another reason for believing that Lord Hardinge's measures were wise and prudent. While we have a large portion of the country under native rulers, their administration will contrast with ours greatly to our advantage in the estimation of the people; and we may be sure that, though some may be against us, many will be for us. If we succeed in sweeping them all away, or absorbing them, we shall be at the mercy of our native army, and they will see it ; and accidents may possibly occur to unite them, or a great portion of them, in some desperate act. The thing is possible, though improbable ; and the best provision against it seems to me to be the maintenance of native rulers, whose confidence and affection can be engaged, and administrations improved under judicious management.

The industrial classes in the Punjab would, no doubt, prefer our rule to that of the Sikhs ; but that portion who depend upon public employment under Government for their subsistence is large in the Punjab, and they would nearly all prefer a native rule. They have evidently persuaded themselves that our intention is to substitute our own rule; and it is now, I fear, too late to remove the impression. If Your Lordship is driven to annexation, you must be in great force ; and a disposition must be shown on the part of the local authorities to give the educated aristocracy of the country a liberal share in the administration.

One of the greatest dangers to be apprehended in India is, I believe, the disposition on the part of the dominant class to appoint to all offices members of their own class, to the exclusion of the educated natives. This has been nobly resisted hitherto; but where every subaltern thinks himself in a condition to take a wife, and the land opens no prospect to his children but in the public service, the competition will became too great.*

* * * * * *

But the British Indian authorities were not honest in their professions. They wanted to swallow up the Panjab and hence they did not try to nip the Multan revolt in the bud. The Resident at Lahore did all he could to further exasperate the Sikhs and wound their feelings and susceptibilities by his very high-handed proceedings. Without any evidence he considered the Queen-mother, Rani Jhinda, to be implicated in the

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* Loc Cit.

Multan affairs and took pleasure in practising refined cruelties on her. She was banished the province and kept a prisoner at Benares. It was not carried out with the unanimous consent of the Council of Regency—indeed it does not appear from the State papers that any one of the Sikh or Hindu members of that Council was consulted on the subject. In a despatch dated the 16th May, 1848, Sir Frederick Currie wrote:

* * * * * *

"Maharanee Jhunda Khore, the mother of Maharajah Duleep Singh, was removed from the fort of Sheikhopoor, *by my orders*, yesterday afternoon; and is now on her way, under charge of an escort, to Ferozepore.

"Her summary banishment from the Punjab, and residence at Benares, under the surveillance of the Governor-General's Agent, subject to such custody as will prevent all intrigue and correspondence for the future, *seems to me* the best course which we could adopt."*

The words put in italics in the above extract clearly prove that the Resident himself was responsible for the step he took in banishing the Queen-mother from the Panjab. He admitted that there was no legal proof of her guilt and that a formal trial of her was undesirable.

"A formal trial of Maharajah Runjeet Singh's widow would be most unpopular and hurtful to the feelings of the people. . . .

"Legal proof of the deliquency of the Maharanee would not, perhaps, be obtainable.†"

Yet he added with that consistency which befits only an occidental diplomatist that

"this is not a time for us to hesitate about doing what may appear necessary to punish State offenders, whatever may be their rank and station, and to vindicate the honour and position of the British Government. . . .

"I propose, therefore, that the Maharanee be sent to Benares under a strong guard;

"At Benares, she should be subject to such surveillance and custody as will prevent her having intercourse with parties beyond her own domestic establishment, and holding correspondence with any person, except through the Governor-General's Agent."

The Maharani was subjected to such persecutions as the followers of that creed only among whom the Inquisition was a recognised institution know how to practise to perfection. Her treatment at the hands of the British functionaries was such as was designed and calculated to exasperate the Sikhs. Currie himself wrote to the Governor-General on the 25th May, 1848:

"The reports from Rajah Shere Singh's camp are that the Khalsa soldiery, on hearing of the removal of the Maharanee, were much disturbed; they said that she was the mother of the Khalsa, and that as she was gone and the young Duleep Singh in our hands, they had no longer any one to fight for or uphold, that they had no inducement to oppose Mulraj and if he came to attack them, would seize the Sardars and their officers, and go over to him."§

Shere Singh in his Manifesto also proclaimed:

"It is well known to all the inhabitants of the Punjaub, to the whole of the Sikhs, and in fact to the world at large, with what oppression, tyranny and undue violence, the Feringhees have treated the widow of the great Maharajah Runjeet Singh, now in bliss.

* Punjab Papers, 1849, p. 168.

† *Ibid.*

§ Punjab Papers, p. 179.

"They have broken the treaty by imprisoning, and sending away to Hindustan, the Maharanee the mother of her people."*

Amir Dost Muhammad also wrote to Captain Abbott†:

"There can be no doubt that the Sikhs are daily becoming more and more discontented. Some have been dismissed from service, while others have been banished to Hindustan, in particular the mother of Maharajah Dulleep Singh, who has been imprisoned and ill-treated. Such treatment is considered objectionable by all creeds, and both high and low prefer death."

But the Christian authorities, intoxicated with power, paid no heed to all these voices of warning. No, it was their policy to exasperate the Sikhs and provoke hostilities in order to deprive them of their independence and earthly possessions. There can be no doubt that the ill-treatment of the Queen-mother by the Christians was one of the principal causes which brought about the Sikh war.

Not only the Governor of Multan was goaded to hostility, but the Sikh Governor of the Hazara province was being so systematically ill-treated and insulted by his foreign Christian subordinates that he considered that his as well as his country's honour and safety lay in driving the English out of the Punjab. The province of Hazara, although it fell to the lot of Gulab Singh of Kashmir, was subsequently exchanged for other territories and given over to the Government of Maharaja Dalip Singh. The venerable and much respected Sirdar Chatar Singh Atariwala was appointed the Governor or Nazim of this province. His son, Raja Sher Singh, was a member of the Council of Regency at Lahore. The manner in which Sirdar Chatar Singh was being treated led him to suspect that his own ruin and that of the Sikh Raj were objects predetermined by the English. His daughter was betrothed to the Maharaja Dalip Singh. To test the good faith of the alien Christian authorities, the Resident at Lahore was asked to fix a day for the marriage to take place. Lieut. (afterwards Sir H. B.) Edwardes wrote to the Resident on the 28th July, 1848:

"He earnestly requested me to procure him an answer from you within ten days. The request seems strange at the present moment. The secret motives of men are difficult to divine; but there can be no question that an opinion has gone very prevalently abroad, and been carefully disseminated by the evil disposed, that the British meditate declaring the Punjab forfeited by the recent troubles and misconduct of the troops; and whether the Attareewalla family have any doubts or not upon this point themselves, it would, I think, be a wise and timely measure to give such public assurance of British good faith, and intention to adhere to the Treaty, as would be involved in authoritative preparations for providing the young Maharajah with a Queen. It would, no doubt, settle men's minds greatly."§

Currie's reply was a very stiff one, and it was couched in the phraseology of occidental diplomacy. He avoided giving any such assurance as Raja Sher Singh wished to elicit, but observed that

"Of course, with reference to the position of the Maharajah, *nothing can be done in this case without the concurrence and approbation of the Resident.*"

* *Ibid.*, p. 362.

† *Ibid.*, p. 512.

§ Punjab Papers, 1849, p. 271.

Then he added that he would

"consult, confidentially, the members of the Durbar now at Lahore on the subject of the time at which the marriage should be celebrated."*

Of course, the Christian Resident did nothing of the sort. His conduct impressed Sirdar Chatar Singh with the belief that the English authorities did not entertain friendly feelings towards the Sikh Raj.

About this very time Captain Abbott, one of the Resident's Assistants who had been appointed to aid and advise Sirdar Chatar Singh in the execution of his duties, was behaving in the most scandalous manner towards the Sikh Governor. He considered Chatar Singh to be

"at the head of a conspiracy for the expulsion of the English from the Punjab, and was about to head a crusade against the British forces at Lahore."†

Captain Abbott had at this time no reasonable grounds for suspecting the fidelity of that Chief. Yet he commenced annoying and persecuting that Chief in a manner which no man possessing any sense of self-respect would at all tolerate. He took up his residence at a distance of thirty-five miles from that of Chatar Singh, from whom he "shut himself out from all personal communication."§ Regarding Captain Abbott's behaviour to the Sikh Governor, the Resident was forced to admit that

"The constant suspicion with which Captain Abbott regarded Sirdar Chuttur Singh, seems to have not unnaturally, estranged that Chief from him."**

But Abbott did something worse. The province of Hazara was inhabited by an armed Mahomedan population, which according to the official account was "warlike and difficult of control."†† Captain Abbott obtained influence over this population by distributing money and promise of an opportunity of revenge over the Sikhs, represented by him as the obstinate persecutors of the Musalman faith. Having thus bought over the Musalmans, he tried to pit them against the Sikhs and harass Chatar Singh. The Sikh Governor was residing at Haripur. Abbott called out the armed Musalman peasantry, who on the 6th of August "assembled in great numbers, and surrounded the town of Haripur." In self-defence, the Sikh Governor ordered the troops, stationed for the protection of the town, to encamp on the esplanade under the guns of the fort. The commandant of the troops was an American Christian named Colonel Canora. He refused to obey the orders of the Sikh Governor. He was not only guilty of gross insubordination, but loaded two of his guns with double charges of grape, and "standing between them with a lighted port fire in his hand, said he would fire on the first man who came near."§§ Some infantry soldiers were sent by Chatar Singh to take possession of the guns. Colonel Canora ordered one of his havildars

* Punjab Papers, p. 272.

† *Ibid.*, p. 279.

§ *Ibid.*, 285.

** *Ibid.*, p, 279.

†† *Ibid.*, p. 18.

§§ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

to fire on these soldiers. As this non-commissioned officer did not obey his orders, so he was cut down by Colonel Canora, who himself applied the match to one of the guns, which missed fire. At that moment he was shot down by two of the infantry soldiers.

So died Colonel Canora, who met with his deserts which he fully deserved. There should have been no pity for his fate, for his conduct was a great military crime. But his death furnished Captain Abbott with a handle to persecute the Sikh Governor. He was not ashamed to call the death of Colonel Canora "an atrocious deed," "a cold-blooded murder" and to speak of Chatar Singh having "determined upon the murder" of Colonel Canora. The Resident, Currie, however, did not agree with Abbott in considering the death of Colonel Canora as "an atrocious deed" or "a cold-blooded murder." His opinion regarding the death of that American officer will be gathered from the following extracts of his letters to Abbott:

"I cannot at all agree with you as to the character you assign to this transaction. Sirdar Chuttur Singh was the Governor of the province, military and civil, and the officers of the Sikh army were bound to obey him, the responsibility for his orders resting with him. Taking the worst possible view of the case, I know not how you can characterise it as "a cold-blooded murder" as base and cowardly as that of Peshora Singh.…

"I have given you no authority to raise levies, and organise paid bands of soldiers, to meet an emergency, of the occurrence of which I have always been somewhat sceptical.

"It is much, I think, to be lamented that you have kept the Nazim at a distance from you; have resisted his offers and suggestion to be allowed himself to reside near you.…

None of the accounts that have yet been made justifies you in calling the death of Commedan Canora a murder, nor in asserting that it was pre-meditated by Sirdar Chuttur Singh. That matter has yet to be investigated."*

But Abbott, determined upon destroying Chatar Singh and the Sikh army, did not hesitate to adopt most unscrupulous and unfair means. In his own despatches he wrote:

"I assembled the Chiefs of Hazara; explained what had happened, and called upon them by the memory of their murdered parents, friends and relatives, to rise, and aid me in destroying the Sikh forces in detail. I issued *purwannas* to this effect throughout the land, and marched to a strong position."†

Of course Sirdar Chatar Singh had to do everything in his power to counteract the evil influences which Abbott brought to bear against him. The Resident wrote to Abbott that Chatar Singh's sons complain that their father had been

"betrayed into misconduct by mistrust, engendered by your withdrawal of your confidence from him, and declared suspicions of his fidelity, and by fear at the Mahomedan population having been raised, as he believed, for his destruction and that of the Sikh army."§

Abbott did not pay any heed to what the Resident wrote to him. It may be that Currie, determined upon provoking the Sikhs to hostility and thus justifying the annexation of the Panjab, was secretly glad at the conduct of Abbott towards Sirdar

* Punjab Papers, 1849, pp. 313-316.

† *Ibid.*, p. 311.

§ *Ibid.*, 1849, p. 296.

Chatar Singh, but to keep up appearances he wrote those letters extracts from which have been given above. Had the Resident been sincere in what he wrote, he should have at once ordered the removal of Captain Abbott from his post at Hazara. According to the testimony of Henry Lawrence and of Frederick Currie himself, Abbott's character was not such as to place him in political situations in hours of crisis. Regarding Abbott, Lawrence wrote to Hardinge in 1847:

"Captain Abbott is an excellent officer; but he is too-apt to take gloomy views of questions. I think he has unwittingly done Dewan Jowala Sahaee injustice."*

Abbott also wittingly or unwittingly, did injustice to another Sikh Chief, named Jhanda Singh. Currie wrote:

"Captain Abbott wrote of Jhunda Singh as one connected with the extensive band of conspirators whom he considered as leagued to aid the Mooltan rebellion.

"Upon that occasion I explained to Captain Abbott, that if his opinion of Sirdar Jhunda Singh's disaffection rested on the facts he has mentioned, it was without due foundation; for that the Sirdar had closely and scrupulously obeyed my orders in every step he had taken."†

Regarding Abbott's political capacity the Resident also wrote:

"His Lordship will have observed a very ready disposition on the part of Captain Abbott to believe the reports that are brought to him of conspiracies, treasons, and plots, suspicion of everybody, far and near, even of his own servants, a conviction of the infallibility of his own conclusions which is not shaken by finding time after time that they are not verified."§

The Resident was thoroughly acquainted with the character of Abbott and so it passes our understanding why he allowed the latter a free hand in the affairs of Hazara. Abbott goaded Sirdar Chatar Singh into open hostilities.**

* Punjab Papers, p. 30.

† *Ibid.*, p. 328.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

** Major Evans Bell in his "Retrospects and Prospects of Indian Policy" truly observes:

"When Chuttur Singh had committed himself beyond retreat by a series of acts of contumacy and hostility, and when Captain Abbott was proving himself fully equal to the occasion, that officer's provocative policy was glossed over and consigned to oblivion. But there is nothing whatever in the Blue Book to show that the Resident ever saw reason to withdraw or modify his opinion that 'the initiative was taken' by Captain Abbott."—P. 118.

"When Chuttur Singh found that his appeal to the President and the Durbar was fruitless; that Captain Abbott's proceedings were not disavowed, or, to his knowledge, disapproved; and that no terms were offered to him but bare life, what could he think but that he had been marked down as the first victim in the general ruin of the Punjaub State? Already alarmed and disgusted by the Maharanee's removal and ill treatment, and by the evasive answer as to the Maharaja's marriage, his head may probably have been full of plots and projects, and he may have been intently watching the course of events, when Captain Abbott's initiative threw him into an equivocal position. When that officer was permitted to pursue what he himself called 'the work of destruction,' unreproved, so far as Chuttur Singh knew,—when the plan of setting up Mahomedans against Sikhs, and reviving ancient blood feuds, was adopted and sanctioned by the highest British authorities, the old Sirdar's disaffection was confirmed. He was driven to desperation, he no longer resisted the importunities of the fanatic Sikhs among his followers and the troops. He plunged into open rebellion, and devoted himself to one last struggle for his religion and the Khalsa Raj." (Pp. 126—127).

It is necessary now to turn our attention again to Multan. Dewan Mulraj's revolt would have been crushed had troops been sent in large numbers to Multan in time. The Second Treaty forced on the Lahore Darbar in December, 1846, left all power in the hands of the British Resident : the members of the Council of Regency were intended to be merely his executive officers. The Khalsa troops were mostly disbanded and in their stead the Darbar was mulcted of a very large sum out of the revenues of the Sikh Panjab for the maintenance of the contingent furnished by the British Indian Government. Maharaja Dalip Singh was merely a feudatory prince and the State of which he was the nominal sovereign was reduced to the condition of a feudatory one. Both civil and military power was taken away from him and his Darbar and placed in the hands of the Resident. Marshman* wrote :

"The precautionary measures adopted by Lord Hardinge manifested equal foresight and vigour. He did not expect that a country teeming with disbanded soldiers, the bravest and most haughty in India, who had been nurtured in victory and conquest, and pampered with seven years of military licence, would be as free om disturbance as a district in Bengal. To provide 'for the prompt suppression of any insurrectionary movements which might arise, he organised three moveable Brigades, complete in carriage and equipment.

These were held in readiness at Lahore, Jullunder and Ferozepore, to take the field at the shortest notice."

Yet to make out a case against the Lahore Darbar and its Sovereign, the Resident thought it convenient and politically expedient to violate the provisions of the Bhairowal Treaty.

With that unscrupulous disregard for truth which marks occidental diplomacy, Sir Frederick Currie was not ashamed to write to Lord Dalhousie :

"Dewan Moolraj is an officer of the Sikh Government ; he is in rebellion,. . . . to the Sikh Durbar, and the orders of that Government. The coercion must come from the Sikh Government, unaided by British troops, if possible. If it should be necessary to move a British soldier, the affair will be a serious one for the Durbar."†

Surely, Aesop's wolf had not invented a more ingenious plea for devouring the lamb than this Christian diplomatist for swallowing up the Sikh Panjab. According to the articles of Agreement of the Bhairowal Treaty of December, 1846, the Lahore Darbar was made to subsidize the British troops for preserving "the peace of the country." Yet in the hour of need the Resident did not "move a British soldier" to put down the rebellion in Multan. Sir Henry Lawrence in his article on the Indian army published in the *Calcutta Review* for March, 1856, quoted the following passage from the first Punjab Report :

"one thousand (1,000) men (half Cavalry, half Infantry,) and two guns, put in motion within two hours of the news of a disturbance reaching any of our station, and able to traverse the country at the rate of twenty or thirty miles a day, will do more to secure the peace of the Punjab than the tardy assemblage of armies."

Commenting on the above, Sir Henry wrote :

* *History of India*, Vol. III, p. 305.

† *Ibid.*, p. 133.

"The above passages entirely express our opinion. There is nothing in the length or breadth of the plains of India that could for an hour stand against such a force. . . . Had the ten thousand men that had been told off, on the N. W. Frontier to meet disturbance, promptly marched on Mooltan, in 1848, there would probably have been no siege ; or at least the affair would have been as insignificant as it proved momentous."*

But it was not the policy of the Resident to nip the Multan rebellion in the bud. Had he done so, the Sikh insurrection would not have grown out of it. † Sir H. B. Edwardes wrote :§

"It was my own belief at the time, that had the Mooltan rebellion been put down at once, the Sikh insurrection would never have grown out of it was a belief shared, moreover, (as well as I remember,) by every political officer in the Punjab, and I for one still think so now."

As said before, the Resident did not move a single British soldier to put down the Multan rebellion. It was not his interest and that of the British Indian authorities to have done so. The Lahore Darbar was asked to employ their own resources to put down the rebellion; and if they failed to do so, they were threatened with the annexation of their province. The Lahore Darbar tried to do as they were bid by Sir Frederick Currie. Sirdar Chatar Singh's son, Raja Sher Singh, at the head of a large contingent of the Darbar troops, marched on Multan. Lieutenant Edwardes, one of the assistants of the Resident on the frontier, raised levies of Muhammadans whose long-standing hatred against Hindus and Sikhs he turned into account, by leading them against Mulraj.** He was also reinforced by the troops of the Nawab of Bhawalpur.

It is not necessary to note in detail the movements of the troops despatched against Multan. Suffice it to say here that Edwardes obtained two victories against Mulraj's troops, and when he appeared before Multan, he could have, according to his own showing, easily taken it, for which purpose, he proposed to the Resident to commence the siege of Multan forthwith, asking only for a few heavy guns, and an

* P. 186.

† Captain Trotter in his *History of the British Empire in India,* Vol. I, p. 134, writes:

"If the delay in crushing the rebellion sprang in part from a secret hope of its spreading far enough to furnish the Government with a fair excuse for annexing the whole dominions of Runjeet Singh, that excuse grew more and more feasible as week after week of the hot and rainy seasons slipped by. Lord Gough's ill-founded fear of a hot weather campaign, the Governor-General's willingness to accept the judgment of an old soldier against the bolder reasonings of a young one, the strange blindness of his Council to the true meanings of events so far away, concurred to ensure the very issues which Edwardes and Sir Frederick Currie might else have forestalled."

§ *A Year in the Punjab Frontier,* Vol. II, p. 145.

** One of the Indian Mussalman correspondents of Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Sindh wrote to him in a letter dated October 6th, 1848 :

"Major Edwardes wrote to Futteh Khan Tawanah, to assemble and kill and plunder the Sikhs in Dera-Gazee-Khan and Bunnoo. But no sooner had he assembled his tribe than the Sikhs killed him. . . . This Futteh's tribe of Tawanah, is a very strong people, and always refractory to Moolraj and the Lahore Durbar. When Major Edwardes was coming from Lahore to attack Moolraj, this chief joined him, and Edwardes apointed him Governor of Bunnoo and Dera-Gazee-Khan, and he was a loyal subject and so lost his life." (*Life of Sir Charles Napier,* Vol. IV, p. 129.)

engineer officer with a detachment of sappers.* Again he wrote in his work already referred to before:

"In June and up to the end of July [1848], I am quite sure that Lieutenant Lake's force and my own could have taken the City of Mooltan with the utmost facility; for it was surrounded by nothing stronger than a venerable brick wall, and the rebel army was dispirited by its losses at Kineyree and Suddoosam. On this point neither Lieutenant Lake nor myself, nor General Cortlandt (who was an older, and therefore a steadier soldier than either of us) had ever any doubt."†

But no British troops were then sent to the help of Edwardes. §

Sher Singh, who was sent to Mooltan, was not successful in his attempt to coerce Mulraj. The Sikh troops under him deserted him and joined Mulraj, because, as said before, they had become quite disgusted with the treatment meted out to the Queen Mother by the Resident. Sher Singh himself would have joined Mulraj, if the latter had taken him. But Mulraj's suspicions were roused against him by the false letters of Edwardes, who always professed and pretended to be a very zealous Christian. Sir Charles Napier's Indian Musalman correspondent wrote to him on October 6, 1848:

"Edwardes has been busy, writing false letters from General Shere Singh, to fall into the hands of Moolraj to create suspicion, in which he partially succeeded and prevented Moolraj attacking him."**

In the meanwhile events were occurring in the north of the Panjab which made Sher Singh leave Multan. Sher Singh's father Chatar Singh was being shamefully

* Punjab Papers, 1849, p. 223.

† *A Year on the Punjab Frontier*, vol. II, p. 403.

§ The Indian Mussalman correspondent of Sir Charles Napier accounts for the raising of the siege of Multan as follows:

"As for Moolraj, when he saw that no British troops moved from Lahore, or the provinces, he tried another stratagem and began to play with Edwardes, and retreated after some partial fights. This encouraged Mr. Edwardes and he called for the Nawab's troops; they both closed Moolraj and shut him up in the fort of Mooltan; many people were joining Moolraj from Bhawalpoor and Punjaub, but he, I positively know, discouraged the Mussalmans and dismissed them with some promises, but he kept the Sikhs. He had always 15000 good, stout Sikhs, and was well able to crush Mr. Edwardes at any moment, but his object was to draw on some British troops. So he began to supplicate and pray for pardon and asked that his life might be spared, and his friends in Edwardes' camp gave out that he had undermined his seraglio and was about to poison himself; and Edwardes after those victories and reducing his enemy to such extremity as poison, really believed and thought himself Clive, Wellesley, and as some chose to call him, Pictou and Craufurd altogether. He did not think his glory would be complete, unless he took Moolraj unconditionally and hanged him where Messrs. Agnew and Anderson were murdered.

"But far from these, not only himself but Sir F. Currie were duped by the Sikhs and Moolraj; and when E. thought that Moolraj only held out for fear for his life, wrote to Sir F. and told him that if a single brigade and some guns would be sent down Moolraj would at once give up unconditionally. But at the same time everybody knew, ... that Moolraj was daily casting guns and had 15,000 men; ...

"...The day General Whish arrived before Mooltan, he, Moolraj, came out to tell Edwardes that he did not want him to spare his life, and drove him out of his camp, and very nearly crushing him and his ally Bhawalpoor; but the Sikh allies interfered between Moolraj and flying Edwardes, and thus he was saved." (pp. 122-123, vol. IV.)

** *Life of Sir Charles Napier*, Vol IV. p. 129.

and disgracefully ill-treated by the British officers. The Indian Musalman correspondent of Sir Charles Napier in the letter to which reference has already been made above wrote that

"The politicals are doing such deeds as to lose their trust and disgust the Sikhs. I am told Mr Nicholson and Captain Abbott wrote to the Hazarees, that if they will drive Chuttur Singh out, three years' revenue should be remitted."

The manner in which Chatar Singh was being persecuted and ill-treated by Captain Abbott has already been mentioned before. As the son of his father, it was the bounden duty of Sher Singh to come to Chatar Singh's rescue. So he left Multan and traced his steps northward to join his father. The siege of Multan was now raised and events to which the British authorities were so longingly looking forward, happened in the Sikh Punjab.

The failure of the siege of Multan emboldened the Sikhs and they rallied round Chatar Singh and Sher Singh to fight for their Khalsa Raj. The Sikhs are not to be blamed; for they had been so systematically maltreated, that they were provoked to hostilities. They would have been less than human beings had they not risen in arms to drive out the Christian intruders from their country. The Indian Musalman correspondent of Sir Charles Napier wrote in the letter to which allusion has been already made before:

"It is now many more times more difficult to subdue Punjab than 1845 when Lord Hardinge had the power to do so, because the object of the Sikhs then was to destroy their refractory troops, and the Sirdars accepted promises, nay took bribes, too, but now they will not take bribes, and animated with great hatred for the way they were treated, and the Sikhs will turn out to a man, unless something extraordinary may happen to prevent, which I can not vouch for at present."*

Yes, the Sikhs as a body had joined out of their common hatred of the English, whom they would have succeeded in driving out of their country, but for the Machiavellian policy the English adopted towards them. They pitted the Musalmans against the Sikhs. It was with the support of the followers of the creed of Islam, that the English succeeded in defeating the Sikhs. Writing of the spread of the Sikh revolt, Captain Trotter in his *History of the British Empire in India*, says of the British officers that

"Left to their own resources, namely, to their skill in turning to account the old-standing hatreds between Sikh and Mahomedan, these men long stood their ground amidst the surging floods about them, with a courage all the hardier as their hopes grew less."†

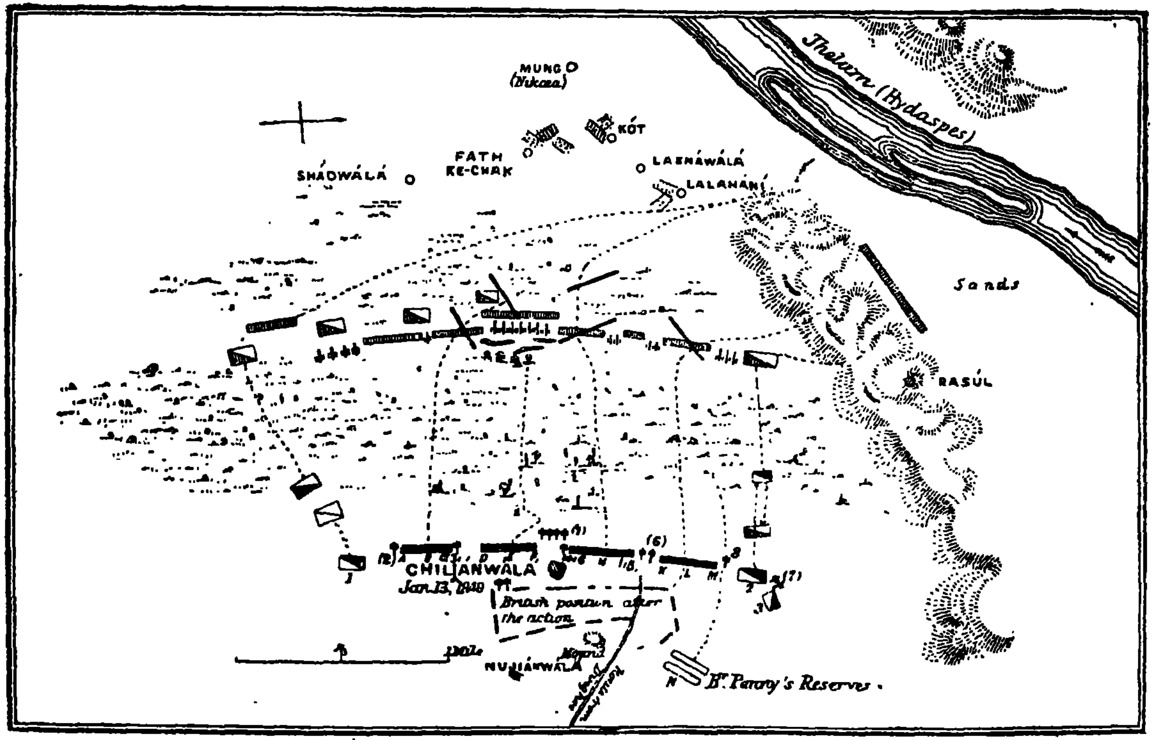
It is sad to contemplate the want of patriotism, statesmanship and foresight exhibited by the votaries of the creed of Muhammad that they should have allied themselves with the English in their design to subvert the Sikh Raj. The fact can not be denied that the Muhammadans in the Panjab enjoyed complete religious toleration under the Sikh Raj. Thus Mr. R. W. Traford writes:§

* P. 125, Vol, IV.

† Vol. I, p. 134.

§ Punjab Notes and Queries, Vol. I, p. 61:

THE BATTLE OF CHILIANWALA.



CAVALRY.
1. White's Brigade (3rd Lt. Drags., 5th and 8th Light Cavalry).
2. Pope's Brigade (14th Dragoons, squadron of 9th Lancers, &c.)

ARTILLERY.
1. Heavy guns.
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Field Bat. & H.A.

INFANTRY.

A 36th N. I. } Hoggan's Brigade.
B H.M. 61st
C 46th N.I.

D 45th N.I. } Pennicuick's Brigade.
E H.M. 24th
F 25th N.I.

G 30th N.I. } Mountain's Brigade.
H H.M. 24th
I 56th N.I.

K 31st N.I. } Godby's Brigade.
L 2nd Europeans
M 70th N.I.

"The principal Queen of Maharaja Ranjit Singh lived at Shekhupura (Gujranwala District), where she built a *Masjid* for her Muhammedan subjects. In a similar spirit of liberality a *Masjid* was erected at Botala *Sivala* by a Sikh Sardar."

Maharaja Ranjit reposed entire confidence in his Mahomedan minister Fakir Azizuddin. Yet members of the family of this Muhammadan minister, who, but for the patronage of Ranjit Singh, would never have risen out of obscurity, proved traitors to the Sikh Raj. His brother Nur-ud-din was a member of the Council of Regency of Lahore, and Sir Lepel Griffin in his work on the Panjab Chiefs writes of him that "he at all times was ready to facilitate matters for the British Resident." It was by his advice that the Queen-Mother, Rani Jhinda, the widow of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, was ordered to be banished out of the Panjab and he personally saw to the order being carried out.*

Of the treachery of another member of the family of the Muhammadan minister Sir Lepel Griffin writes :

"Fakir Shamsuddin, second son of Nuruddin, was Thanadar of the Gobindgarh fort during the Second Sikh War. In this position he behaved with great fidelity, and made over the fort to European troops at a time when any hesitation on his part might have produced serious results."†

What Griffin calls "fidelity" was in reality "treachery."

It is no wonder then that the Sikhs having traitors among their Muhammadan compatriots were easily overcome by their Christian antagonists.

It was not till October, 1848—when Mulraj had held out for six months—that the Sikh Sirdars of the Panjab made up their minds to join Chatar Singh and make the Khalsa Raj independent of the English. The English also were not idle. They assembled the troops and the Commander-in-Chief Lord Gough had to take the field. The siege of Multan had been raised in September, 1848. But the British troops again invested it. The fort of Multan was a strong one and considered quite impregnable. Sir Charles Napier writing in August, 1848, to his brother Major-General W. Napier said :

"If he (Lt. H. B. Edwardes) beats Moolraj, he will be safe ; but if Moolraj gets an advantage Edwardes' position will be dangerous, . . . If Moolraj's men are true, Edwardes can not take Mooltan ; it they are false the town will open its gates."§

So it was not altogether the sword on which the English depended for success in their campaign against the Sikhs. Occidental diplomacy was the more useful weapon to insure their success than military strategy or mere powder and shot.

It is not necessary to enter into details regarding the battles which were fought between the English and the Sikhs—the battles of Ramnagar, Chilianwala and Gujarat. Gough was outmanouvred by Sher Singh and the British forces were defeated by the Sikhs at Chilianwala. This battle was the last one won by the Sikh soldiers on the plains of India.§§ It was fought in January 1849. But unfortunately the Sikhs did not

* Punjab Papers, 1849, p. 228.

† *The Punjab Chiefs*, new (1890) Edition. Vol. I, p. 1109.

§ *Life of Sir Charles Napier*, Vol. IV, p. 106.

§§ Marshman writing of the battle of Chilianwala, says that it was "one of the most disastrous

take full advantage of it. Of course, the Sikh soldiers were the best fighting men in the world. Marshman in his article on the Second Panjab War, published in the *Calcutta Review* for December, 1849, wrote :

"Throughout the war, at Ramnuggur, at Chillianwallah, at Russul, at the passage of the Indus, the Sikh army waited for, escaped from or moved round the British, with the most perfect facility ; crossed rivers, which occupied British troops many days; and in every imaginable mode, demonstrated that the excellence of the British Commissariat was no match for the simplicity of the Sikh, and that men, who can bivouac in the open air, and live on parched grain will march much faster than those who must have double tents, and carry their luxuries with them."*

Sher Singh should not have left his intrenched position at Rasul, in the immediate neighbourhood of Chilianwala, where he had taken up his quarters after that memorable victory. Writes Marshman :

"The Commander-in-Chief rode over the ground, which the Sikhs had vacated, and the intrenchments which they had thrown up, and which it would have cost thousands of lives to capture. But the men and the cannon which should have defended them, were gone ; and it became manifest that the Sikh army of 30,000 men, with sixty guns, all lying within four miles of the British encampment, had marched round the army of the Punjab, had escaped the eyes of its Commander-in-Chief, and was now in his rear, in full march for Lahore."†

But Sher Singh could not reach Lahore, and was intercepted at Gujrat, where took place the last fight which crushed all hope of Sikh independence. The military strategy of the English at Gujrat was faulty. Writing of this, Sir Charles Napier said :

"Grant and Lawrence are good men in their position and if we had a war I would put Grant at the head of a division ; but neither of them are generals. Grant would be, if he had studied war, but he has not. The battle of Gujrat was his, and marked by a total absence of science. The Sikh army, not a manoeuvering army able to change front in action, whose left rested on an impassable river, whose right was *'en l' air*, and weak as water, whose front was strong, ought to have been attacked on its right ; and the more especially that its only line of retreat was through a pass on the right, and a rapid movement of our left, when winning, would have gained that pass, and driven the Sikhs into the river, the fords of which were guarded by us on the left bank, it was an adjutant-general's battle, not a scientific one."§

Regarding Sher Singh's mistake, Napier wrote :

"His (Sher Singh's) position would have been very strong indeed had he made Goojerat the

engagements we have ever fought in India—an engagement, by which no one advantage was gained, and in which British troops were checked by a barbarian enemy who had not even the advantage of numbers . . . .

" 'Our loss amounted to no less than 2,300 killed and wounded, of whom nearly 800 were slain. Twenty-six officers were killed on the spot, or died of their wounds ; sixty-six were wounded. Her Majesty's 24th and the 30th and 56th native infantry were so entirely disabled, that they were compelled to be disjoined from the force, and sent back to Ramnuggar and Lahore. Her Majesty's 20th and the 24th native infantry lost both their colours ; the 25th and 26th lost each one ; the 5th cavalry, lost the colour they won on the field of Maharajpore." (*Calcutta Review*, December, 1849, p. 286).

* Pp. 267-268.

† *Ibid.*, p. 287.

§ Vol. IV, p. 282.

front of his centre, instead of a support a mile in rear: that, or gone in rear of the pass altogether." *

Again he wrote:

"I told Shere Sing he should have fortified Goojerat as the centre of his position instead of having it a mile in his rear; he said he had no power to do what he wished, the other Chiefs overruled him...He said his plan was to cross the Chenab and march on Lahore, and he evidently thought that Goolab Sing would then have joined him: indeed Lord Dalhousie told me he had proofs that such was Goolab's design when opportunity offered. The plan appears to me excellent and had the people risen in Gough's rear the old Chief would have been in a devil of a plight."

It is not improbable that there was some treachery in the camp of Sher Singh which made him lose the battle of Gujrat and surrender himself and the Sikh troops unconditionally to the English.

At Multan also, Dewan Mulraj had to surrender himself, after a gallant resistance of nine months, unconditionally to the English. He could not hold out any longer, for he ran short of provisions and powder and shot, his magazine having caught fire and being destroyed.

Thus ended the Second Sikh War in which the Sikhs fought very bravely, but had at last to surrender themselves to the English. Their national independence became a thing of the past and in after years they became servile followers of their masters.

* *Ibid.*, p. 198.

CHAPTER LXXXIV

ANNEXATION OF THE PANJAB

It has been said before that political and financial considerations made it impossible for Lord Hardinge to annex the whole of the Panjab after the First Sikh War. But the second or the Bhairowal Treaty, as it is called, which his lordship forced on the Lahore Darbar was worse than annexation of the land of the five rivers to the British territories. That treaty was intended to provoke hostilities, and then the appointment of Sir Frederick Currie as Resident, who had no love for Dalip Singh or the Khalsa Raj, was made with the secret object of exasperating the Sikhs, of goading them to war and of finally annexing their country. The English animated by that precept of Jesus which declared. "Do unto others," etc.. were clamorous for devouring the remnant of the Kingdom of Runjit Singh. This is evident from the letters addressed to the Governor-General of India (Lord Dalhousie), by "Economist," an officer of practical experience in the Panjab.* Just after the surrender of Dewan Mulraj at Multan, this officer addressed the first of his letters to Dalhousie, in which he advised his lordship to annex the Panjab. He wrote:

"The arguments in favour of annexation of the Punjab are rather negative than positive—rather that no one can devise any other *possible* plan than that the acquisition itself is desirable."

In the above sentence is struck the keynote of all his arguments for the annexation. He did not stop to consider whether such a measure was just or not. But he proceeded and said:

"The question now to be decided is no matter of petty policy—no mere affair of Duleep Singh or Sir Frederick Currie, nor even a purely *Sikh* question ··· But it is now for you, my Lord, to fix the permanent limits of our Indian Empire. ··· A lasting line of demarcation must be drawn ; permanent land marks must be set up ; and then, having disposed of our external defences, we may turn to internal management, and do what we have never yet done—make the country *pay*."

It was on these grounds that this officer told Dalhousie to

"Hold it (Punjab) for good, or give it up for ever."

To keep the people of the Panjab in subjection, he advised his lordship to grind them to poverty, place the iron heel on their necks and rule them without any show of justice or mercy. He wrote:

"Do not buy the consent of such people to a 'treaty of annexation.' Take a more straightforward and wiser course. In regard to those who have really some claim to be considered the *nobility* of the country, Sikh Chiefs, and Jagheer-possessing sodies, gooroos, &c.,—I would only say, keep them down as much as possible. A well satisfied and *unimpoverished* nobility may be all very well to European notions, but, if we are to rule in Asia, we are much better without them....Such people

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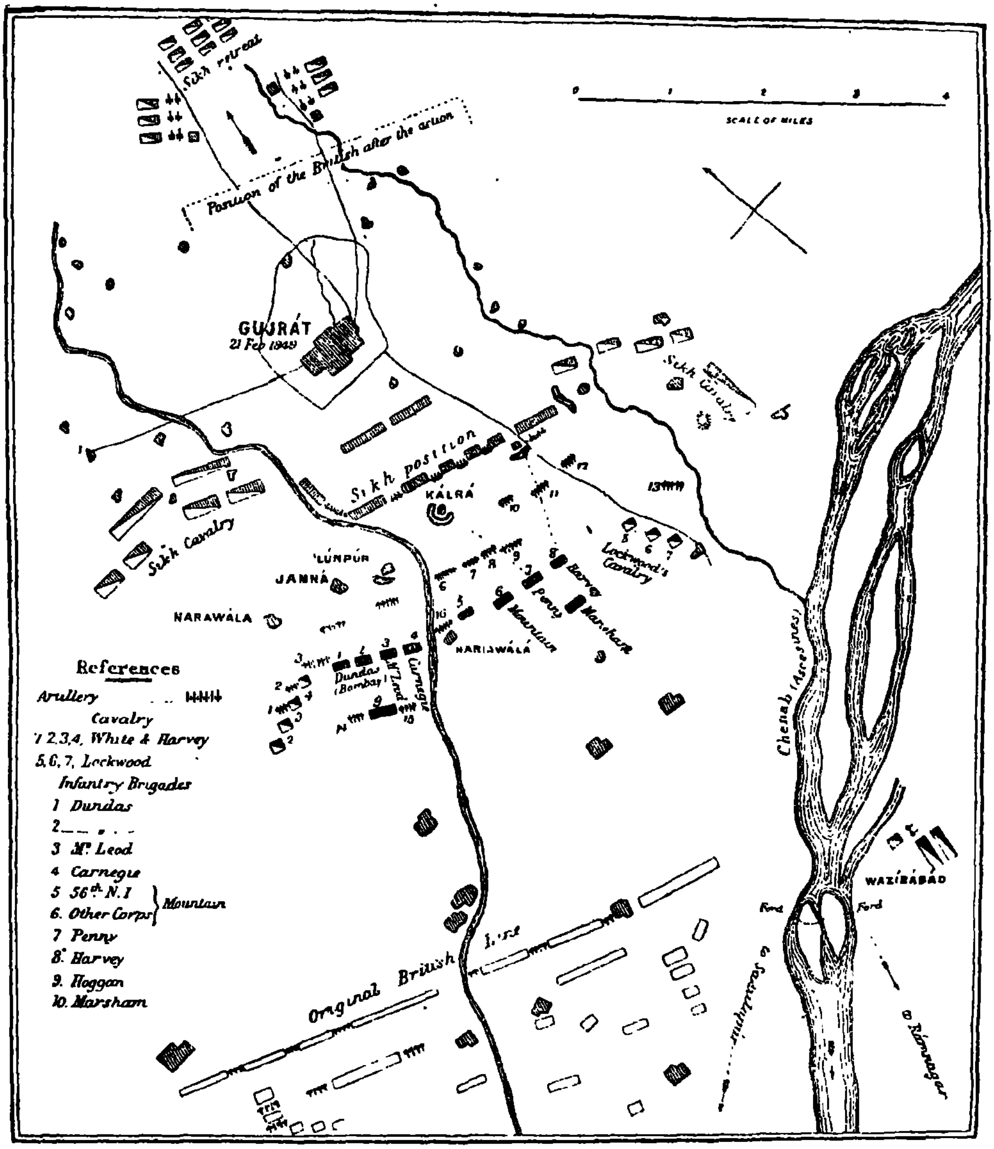
* These letters were reprinted and published by the "Sun" printing press of Lahore in 1897. "Economist" was Sir_George Cambell, who rose to be the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.



BATTLE OF GUJRAT

The troops and batteries of Artillery in the above Plan were commanded by the following officers.—

1. Huish.
2. Duncan.
3. Blood.
4. Ludlow
5. Robertson.
6. Lane (previously 14).
7. Day.
8. Dawes
9. Horsford
10. Fordyce.
11. Anderson.
12. Mackenzie.
13. Warner
14. See No 6.
15. Kinleside
16. Shakspeare

should be reduced to a reasonable subsistence, so that they may neither be driven entirely desperate, nor retain more than is good for them and for us."

This was no doubt a counsel of perfection, on which it is needless to say that the Christian Government of India in those days always acted not only in the Punjab, but in other parts of India also.

The same writer pointed out the advantages of annexation as follows:

i. It is easier (and especially so in India where the principle of passive obedience to the powers that be is so universal) to hold in check *disarmed* than an armed people.

ii. A considerable force must always be maintained on the frontier of India. If this force occupies the Punjab the revenues of that country are available as an offset to meet a portion of the expense...

iii. By taking the Punjab we arrive at the natural boundaries of India, and obtain a final settlement of the question.

iv. We shall be enabled to establish a sure defence against the hordes of Central Asia and the Russians, or any one else who may have an eye to the East...

v. Independent of the expense and anxiety of always keeping an army in the field east of the Sutlej, we have, as a question of humanity, to choose between a state of continual war and a secure peace....

vi. ... If we do not keep the Punjab—what then? We must abandon the country and retire—our prestige will be ruined and our name will lose its spell. We shall have commenced a backward career. Is any one prepared to advocate this? I believe that it is impossible....

"...The Punjab must henceforth be held by British troops, and by British troops alone. The occupation must be complete as to manner—no *concurrent*, but an *exclusive* possession—complete as to place—of no *portion* of the country, *but of the whole*—complete as to time—for no term of years, but for a *permanency*."

He did not advise Dalhousie to repeat the experiment of Hardinge, the experiment of a double government in the Panjab. It must be admitted that there was some truth in his arguments. He wrote:

"There is nothing on which so much depends as the feeling of self-responsibility. If the natives are left to themselves, they feel that every thing rests with themselves, and they are not altogether depraved. Take away this feeling—support them with a military force—interfere vexatiously in their civil system—and they become but the corrupt instruments of a corrupt system. They lose all power of doing good, and but apply their remaining strength to do unmitigated evil for their own sordid and selfish ends. I utterly deny the *possibility* of a respectable native Government supported by our troops and over-ridden by our Politicals. . . . The natives cannot consider themselves the rulers of the country. . . .

"The people of the country would not feel themselves thoroughly our subjects. They would be exposed to the evils of either system; they would be serving two masters. Unquiet and uncertainty must prevail, and all progress be much retarded."

But the strongest argument that he advanced for annexation of the Panjab was that might is right. He wrote:

"People begin to discover that, in a country where from time immemorial might is right, we having the greatest *might have also the best right . . . . it has become our duty as well as our right* to hold."

Another argument which this officer urged in favour of annexation was that the continuance of the Sikh Raj would go against the interests of the Muhammadan

population of the Panjab, because they assisted the English against the Sikhs and so the latter would make short work of them. He wrote :

"After having stirred them (the frontier Musalman tribes) up to rebel against the Sikhs unassisted by our troops, how we are to persuade them to receive as the price of their exertions a yet heavier yoke, I don't know. Abbott's Hazarehs and Edwarde's Pathans can hardly consider themselves to be fighting merely on our account. They look on it as an opportunity of regaining their inheritance."

Of course, Dalhousie was for annexation. Wrote the Christian officer :

"I believe that your first thoughts were for annexation."

But Henry Lawrence, who had returned and resumed charge of the Lahore Residency from Sir Frederick Currie in the beginning of January, 1849, was opposed to annexation. Wrote this Christian officer :

"I understand, however, that Sir Henry Lawrence is opposed to it. Now, I would not for a moment be supposed to impugn the purity of that gentleman's motives, but I beg of you to remember that not only was he a principal artificer in the settlement which has just broken down, but under present arrangements he is King of the Punjab. As then, human nature is but human nature, you must regard Sir Henry not so much as an unbiassed adviser as a potentate pleading his own cause. ...

"To another opinion of Sir Henry's I would not be so tolerant. It is said that he has come back to declare that the 'Sikhs had been exceedingly ill used' and that if he had stayed there would have been nothing of the kind. Now this is, really, too much. ...

"Altogether, I think that if Sir H. Lawrence says that the Sikhs were ill used after his departure, the charge is ungrateful and unfair."

Of course, this Christian officer considered the Treaty existing between the Christians and the Sikhs as so much waste paper. For, he wrote :

"I am glad to find that the treaty seems to have died a natural death. No argument is hinged on *that* pretext, and the tenderest conscience may, therefore, throw over that consideration without fear of offence. In fact, *'the Sikhs'* neither made the treaty nor broke it. The few individuals who went through the farce of consent were nominees of the British power. Duleep Sing was a mere piece of paper money, and is now as valueless as a note when the bank has broken."

The natives of England were afraid to annex the Panjab, because it was inhabited by martial tribes who might give trouble to their Christian rulers. Against this argument the Christian officer wrote :

"After all, *fear* is the prevailing argument against annexation. The *Times* talks of the martial tribes commencing with the Sutlej. But *you* are not 'afraid !' ...

"But annex, if things are managed by people who understand them, the country will assume exactly the same phase as the Cis-Sutlej territory—"

"The broad fact remains, that in our own important possessions serious rebellion has throughout our history in India been *unknown*. Will you, then—can you, in the face of this all-powerful fact—give way to imaginary fear ? ...Annexation will bring safe and lasting peace."

Such were the arguments of this sagacious Christian officer for annexing the Panjab. And when Dalhousie annexed that province he wrote his last letter in which he heartily congratulated his lordship.

On the 29th March, 1849, his lordship issued a proclamation tolling the death-knell of the Sikh Raj.

Again, in his farewell minute, dated the 28th of February, 1856, Dalhousie, with that unscrupulous disregard for truth which characterises occidental diplomacy, wrote :

"The murder of the British officers at Mooltan, and the open rebellion of the Dewan Moolraj, were not made pretext for quarrel with the Government of Lahore....The Sikhs themselves were called upon to punish Moolraj as a rebel against their own sovereign, and to exact reparation for the British Government whose protection they had previously invoked.

"But when it was seen that the spirit of the whole Sikh people was inflamed by the bitterest animosity against us—when Chief after Chief deserted our cause, until nearly their whole Army, led by Sirdars who had signed the treaties, and by members of the Council of Regency itself, was openly arrayed against us—when above all, it was seen that the Sikhs, in the eagerness for our destruction, had been combined in unnatural alliance with Dost Mahomed Khan and his Mahomedan tribes—it became manifest that there was no alternative left. The question for us was no longer one of policy or of expediency, but one of national safety.

"Accordingly, the Government put forth its power. After a prolonged campaign, and a struggle severe and anxious, the Sikhs were utterly defeated and subdued, the Afghans were driven with ignominy through the mountains, and the Punjab became a British province."

But that the annexation of the Panjab cannot be justified from moral considerations will be admitted by all unbiased and fair-minded men. Regarding this annexation, Major Evans Bell truly observes :

"Lord Dalhousie's procedure in settling the future relations of the Punjab with British India after the campaign of 1849, just amounts to this : a guardian, having undertaken, for a valuable consideration, a troublesome and dangerous trust, declares, on the first occurrence of those troubles and dangers, of which he had full knowledge and fore-warning, that as a compensation for his exertions and a protection for the future, he shall appropriate his Ward's estate and personal property to his own purposes. And this, although the guardian holds ample security in his own hands for the repayment of any outlay, and the satisfaction of any damages he might have incurred, in executing the conditions of the trust."*

The same author has very scathingly exposed the untruthful character of the statements contained in Dalhousie's proclamation. Extracts from his writings are given below. He writes :

"During the period prescribed by the Treaty for the Maharaja's minority, no crisis, no second struggle, could absolve the British Government from the obligations of guardianship and management, so long as it professed to fulfill those duties, and was able to do so without interruption.

" ... supposing the rebellion had not been in the slightest degree provoked or extended by any error, excess, omission, or delay of the British Government,—Lord Dalhousie's case would not be in the least improved. Supposing that the surmise by which he attempted to justify the annexation, were demonstrably true, and that the Sikhs were really animated, from the first day of the occupation, with so deep and bitter a hostility, that they only watched their opportunity for revolt, and would never have been pacified without a second lesson, then I say that they were entitled to that second lesson, without any extra charge. The State of Lahore had paid heavily in money, and in territory, for the first lesson ; and we had undertaken, in consideration of an annual subsidy, secured on the public revenues administered by ourselves, to perform the office of teacher for a term of years. If unexpected difficulties had presented themselves in the performance of this office, we should even then, have had no right to complain. But it was not so. We understood quite well the nature of the evils to encounter and cure, and they were clearly aggravated by our own malpractice."

* *Retrospects and Prospects of Indian Policy*, p. 142.

"The continued existence of this Regency, throughout the rebellion, proves that British responsibility and guardianship were never shaken off or shifted for a day. If indeed the British Resident had been driven from his position at Lahore; if he had lost the custody of the Maharajah's person; if he had been forced to abdicate for a time the functions of government, and the Ward had thrown off his tutelage, the guardian might have been justified in re-entering the country as a conqueror, and declaring all previous engagements to be at an end. But no such interruption ever took place. The Resident's authority as chief ruler of the Punjab was never suspended. During the rebellion, which in Lord Dalhousie's opinion warranted him in dethroning his Ward, the capital city was never disturbed; and the Government of the Punjab, exactly as we had chosen to organise it,—including the Council of Regency,—was unaltered to the last....

"Lord Dalhousie totally fails to make out any violation of the Treaty against the Lahore State,—the only specific instance he adduces, the non-payment of the subsidy, being, as we have seen a mere matter of account, by which the case is not modified to the prejudice of the State of Lahore. He contrives to fasten a plausible stigma of perfidy and violation of treaties upon the State of Lahore, only by ringing the changes through several paragraphs, upon the terms, 'the Sikh nation,' 'the Sikhs,' 'the Sikh people,' and 'the Government,' or 'State of Lahore,' until a thorough confusion is established. For these are not convertible terms.

"The Sikh people,' . . . is not a phrase synonymous with 'the people of the Punjab,' the great majority of whom took no share in the revolt, and felt no sympathy with it; while at least 20,000 subjects of the Lahore State, enrolled in its service, fought on the side of the Government, and assisted in suppressing the rebellion.

"It is strange that Lord Dalhousie should have so completely overlooked the real difference between 1846 and 1849. The question of age was immaterial at both periods. There was no plea of annexation in 1846 when the warning was given and acknowledged, because the Maharajah was the reigning Prince of an independent state. In 1849 the actual ruler of the state was the British Resident, under the Governor-General's instructions....

"From the 16th of December, 1846, the date of the treaty of Bhyrowal, down to the 29th of March, 1849, when the Proclamation annexing the Punjab was issued, the Government of Lahore was in strict subordination to the British Government; and its subordination was never interrupted, suspended, or relaxed for a single day. If, indeed, the Government of Lahore could justly have been made responsible for any of the untoward events in 1848 and 1849, Sir Frederick Currie, the Resident, must have been the first person indicated, for he was the absolute head of that Government."*

Of course, the annexation could not be justified from any moral considerations. But then "the official wolves," with whom "the pretext of the muddied stream was always nigh at hand—" wolves like Dalhousie and his adviser Frederick Currie, had bidden farewell to the dictates of their conscience, if they ever possessed one, and were not to be swayed by any moral considerations. There is very little doubt that Lord Dalhousie was assisted by Sir Frederick Currie in drawing up the Proclamation of the 29th March, 1849, sealing the doom of the Sikh Raj.

One important reason for the annexation of the Panjab was that it grew cotton. That had been a reason for the annexation of Sindh also.

* Major Evans Bell's *Retrospects and Prospects of the Indian Policy*, Chapter VI.

CHAPTER LXXXV

THE SECOND BURMESE WAR

The Second Burmese War was a wanton outrage on humanity, for there was no *casus belli* for it. With that unscrupulous disregard for truth which characterises Lord Dalhousie's state documents, he did not blush to write in his farewell Minute the following as justifying the war:

"When little more than two years had passed [after the Sikh War], the Government of India again was suddenly engaged in hostilities with Burmah.

"Certain British traders in the Port of Rangoon had been subjected to gross outrage by the officers of the King of Ava, in direct violation of the Treaty of Yandaboo. . . .

"Of all the Eastern nations with which the Government of India has had to do, the Burmese were the most arrogant and overbearing . . . .

"However contemptible the Burman race may seem to critics in Europe, they have ever been regarded in the East as formidable in the extreme. Only five and twenty years before, the news of their march towards Chittagong had raised a panic in the bazars of Calcutta itself; and even in the late War, a rumour of their supposed approach spread consternation in the British Districts of Assam and Arracan . . . .

"Every effort was made to obtain reparation by friendly means . . . . But every effort was vain. . . .

"But our forbearance was fruitless. Accordingly, in the end of 1852, the British troops took possession of the Kingdom of Pegu, and the territory was retained, in order that the Government of India might hold from the Burman State both adequate compensation for past injury and the best security against future danger."

It is proper to say that the above is a tissue of falsehoods which occidental diplomatists know how to resort to to suit their convenience and purpose. Three years before Dalhousie penned his minute, Cobden had very scathingly exposed the immorality and injustice of the Burmese War in a publication which he very aptly named, "How Wars are got up in India." No attempt was made by Dalhousie to controvert or deny the serious allegations made against the Indian Government by Cobden. Cobden's is a name held sacred in almost every house-hold in England, for if the natives of that country to-day are enabled to get their bread cheap, it is not to a small measure due to the exertions of that English statesman. If the Englishman reveres his memory as that of a patriot, the Indian should look upon him as a philanthropist, for he tried to do justice to India.

It is a pity that none of the Christian writers of Indian history or of the biography of Lord Dalhousie has ever referred to Cobden's pamphlet on the Second Burmese War. Mr. F. W. Chesson in his note to the pamphlet says that this

"pamphlet was written in the summer of 1853, nearly three years before the late Lord Dalhousie, then Governor-General of India, had terminated the career of violence and spoliation which dazzled the nation by the meretricious lustre of its successes, but which, to the prescient eye of Mr. Cobden, who saw with painful clearness its injustice and immorality, was fraught with the greatest peril to the Empire. . . . Mr. Cobden lost no time in disentombing the facts from the same official burial-ground

[that is, Parliamentary papers], and with a result which will entitle his searching exposure of deeds that will not bear the light to the thoughtful consideration of all Englishmen who desire to make themselves acquainted with the true history of Indian misgovernment."

In the preface to his pamphlet, Mr. Cobden wrote :

"I may say, by way of explanation, that the whole of the narrative is founded exclusively upon the Parliamentry papers, . . . It should be borne in mind that the case, such as it is is, founded upon our own *ex parte* statement. A great many of the letters are mutilated : and, remembering that, in the Afghan papers, it is now known that the character of at least one of the Cabool Chiefs was sacrificed by a most dishonest garbling of his language, I confess I am not without suspicions that a similar course may have been pursued in the present instance. I will only add, then, bad as our case now appears, what would it be if we could have access to the Burmese "Blue Books," stating their version of the business ?"

The stay-at-home English as well as Anglo-Indian writers on the Second Burmese War have tried to blame the Government of Burma for having provoked the war by their insolence and ill-treatment of British subjects trading in that country. Thus the historian of the Second Burmese War, one Lieut. W. F. B. Lawrie, says (p. 20) :

"Latterly, our merchants at Rangoon, contrary to the stipulations of the treaty [of Yandaboo], were subjected to a series of oppressions and exactions, which, if unredressed, must have obliged us to quit the port....

"It is unnecessary to enter into a detail of all the insults heaped upon us by the Burmese. Suffice it to mention one case of injustice and oppression, that of a British captain of a vessel, who, on the false representation of a Burmese* pilot, was placed by the governor of Rangoon in the stocks, and fined nine hundred rupees."

The facts which brought about the war with the Burmese have been very carefully set forth by Mr. Cobden in the pamphlet referred to above and which is compiled from Parliamentary papers. The opening sentence of his pamphlet is that

"In June, 1851, the British barque *Monarch,* of 250 tons, last from Moulmein, reached Rangoon, the principal port of the Burmese Empire. On the second day after their arrival, Captain Shepperd the master and owner, 'was taken before the police to answer the charge of having, during the voyage, thrown overboard the pilot Esoph, preferred by a man named Hajim, a native of Chittagong, who stated that he was brother of the said pilot'...."†

"Captain Shepperd was mulcted in fines and fees to the amount of £46, and permission was then given him to depart ; but when about to sail he was again detained, 'owing to a charge brought by a man named Dewan Ali (a British subject, employed in one of the Moulmein gunboats), calling himself a brother of the pilot, bringing forward a claim for a sum of 500 rupees, which he stated his brother had taken with him.'§ This led to a fresh exaction of £55...."

Captain Lewis of the British vessel the *Champion,* which in August, 1851, arrived at Rangoon, from the Mauritius was mulcted by the governor in fines and fees to the amount of £70. The charges of murder and other offences were preferred against Captain Lewis by two Bengali coolies, who had secreted themselves on board his ship, with a view to return to their country and they were joined by some *lascars* and others of the crew, who deserted.

* The pilot was not a Burmese, but a British Indian subject as will be mentioned presently.

† Papers relating to hostilities with Burmah presented to Parliament, June 4, 1852, p. 5.

§ *Ibid.*

Cobden remarks and he has put in italics his remarks (p. 30. Edition of 1867) that

"*It must be borne in mind that all the parties to these suits were British subjects ;* the governor of Rangoon had not been adjudicating in matters in which Burmese interests, as opposed to those of foreigners, were at stake."

But the two gallant captains in order to furnish the Christian Government of India with a handle to proceed against Burma—knowing that any complaint against any independent power of the East would be quite welcome to the British Indian authorities, appealed to the Indian Government for redress. Although they claimed together £1,920, as compensation for ill-usage, etc., their claim was cut down by the Indian authorities to £920, that is, in the case of Captain Shepperd of the barque *Monarch*, Rs. 3500 and of the *Champion* Rs. 5600. A demand was made of the Burmese government for the payment of these sums as compensation for losses sustained by the two above-mentioned officers. For our own part, we fail to see how according to any International Law, the Government of India could sit in appeal over the decisions of the court of any other independent country. But Burma was weak and the pretext of the muddied stream was necessary to the wolves of Anglo-India to swallow up that country.

The Government of India took up the complaint with great alacrity and eagerness. Two of the Queen's ships, the *Fox* and the *Serpent*,* under the command of Commodore Lambert were lying in the Hughli. Dalhousie lost no time in despatching Commodore Lambert to Rangoon to demand reparation, that is, the payment of £920, of the Burmese authorities for the injuries sustained by Captains Shepperd and Lewis.

Before proceeding further it is necessary to state here that Dalhousie made a mistake† in entrusting Commodore Lambert with this diplomatic affair. Sir William Lee-Warner in his Life of Lord Dalhousie writes :

"As to the policy of the step taken by the Government of India, John Lawrence in a letter to Courtenay, the private secretary, asked, "Why did you send a Commodore to Burma if you wanted peace ?"§

Dalhousie also in a letter to his uncle, Lord Broughton, wrote on the 23rd of January, 1852, that "these Commodores are too combustible for negotiations."

Notwithstanding the instructions given to Commodore Lambert to which reference will be made presently, the very fact of sending him at the head of a squadron to Rangoon makes one suspect that Dalhousie intended a rupture with Burma. It was not the duty of the Commodore to play the part of a diplomatist.

Mr. Cobden writes:

"But where was the necessity for sending a squadron at all, until after a demand for redress

* Their names quite justified the part they (or rather their commandants) played in provoking the war.

† May it not be that Dalhousie selected Commodore Lambert and furnished him with secret instructions to provoke the Burmese to hostilities ?

§ Vol. I, p. 417.

had been made through a civilian, or at least a Company's officer, who* understood the customs of the country, and the more especially so, as it was the first complaint that had been officially presented to the Government of Burmah ?†

The instructions given to Commodore Lambert were that he should demand reparation from the Governor of Rangoon for the injuries sustained by Captains Shepperd and Lewis, but wrote Dalhousie that

"It would be right that the Commodore should in the first instance be satisfied on this head.§

This implied that Commodore Lambert was to hear both sides and to inquire on the spot whether the compensation claimed was founded on justice.

The Commodore was furnished with a letter addressed to His Majesty the King of Burma which was to be forwarded to him "in the event of the Governor refusing or evading compliance." After forwarding the letter to the King at Ava, the Commodore was instructed to proceed to the Persian Gulf, whither his lordship understands he is under orders to proceed."**

Dalhousie's instructions to the Commodore concluded as follows:

"It is to be distinctly understood that no act of hostility is to be committed at present, though the reply of the Governor should be unfavourable, nor until definite instructions regarding such hostilities shall be given by the Government of India."††

The instructions were quite definite but these were all set aside by the gallant Commodore, who at the head of his squadron sailed from Calcutta and landed at Rangoon towards the end of November, 1851. No sooner had he landed there

* The writer on the Burmese War in the *Calcutta Review* for July, 1852, quotes from the Treaties and Engagements between the Honourable East India Company and Native Powers in Asia :

"Since this time (1840) all communications with the Burmese authorities have been conducted through the Commissioner in the Tenasserim Provinces."

Then the writer proceeds :

"For twelve years then all negotiations with the Court of Burmah have been conducted through the intervention of the Tenasserim Commissioner, .. upon receipt of the representations of Captains Lewis and Shepperd, . . . the President in Council, ... intimated to Colonel Bogle, that Commodore Lambert had been instructed to proceed to Rangoon, ... Now this is the first point which is open to question. Why was the usual course of procedure departed from ? Why was not Colonel Bogle ordered to conduct the negotiations in the usual way ? . . . But we do think that it would have been well if the ordinary channel of communication had first been tried, and Colonel Bogle had been instructed, without any demonstrations of hostile intentions in the first instance, to make a firm and decided demand upon the King of Burmah for the dismissal and punishment of the offending officer, and ample pecuniary compensation to the aggrieved British subjects. . . . . But Lord Dalhousie thought that the more decided method of sending at once an armed envoy, 'a Cromwellian Ambassador,' would have the effect of intimidating the Burmese authorities, and so avoiding the necessity of actual recourse to war." (P. 206-207.)

It seems that it was with the deliberable intention of provoking the Burmese to hostilities that Dalhousie departed from the usual course of procedure.

† P. 100, 1867 edition.

§ Edition of 1867, p. 32.

** *Ibid.*, p. 33.

†† *Ibid.*

than he encouraged the British residents of that place to bring their complaints and alleged grievances against the Governor of Rangoon. But before the day (28th November) appointed by the Commodore on which the residents were requested to bring their grievances in writing, he wrote on the 27th November, "before," as Cobden observes, "a written declaration was in his hands," the following insulting letter to the Governor of Rangoon :

"The object of my visit to Rangoon was at the request of the Most Noble the Marquis of Dalhousie, the Governor-General of British India, to demand redress for insults and injuries you have committed on subjects belonging to her Britannic Majesty Queen Victoria.

"Since my arrival so many more complaints have been made by persons residing at Rangoon who have a right to claim British protection that I have deemed it my duty to withold my original demand until I have again made known their complaints to his lordship."

But he did not wait for instructions from Dalhousie. On the very next day (*i.e.*, 28th November) he forwarded to the Governor of Rangoon for transmission to His Majesty the King of Burma the letter with which he had been furnished by the Government of India and which he had been instructed to make use of only "in the event of the Governor refusing or evading compliance." At the same time the gallant Christian Commodore wrote a letter to the Prime Minister of His Majesty the King of Ava. Of course, the gallant Commodore thought it beneath his dignity to show any courtesy to the Governor of Rangoon, for in writing to him he made use of language as follows :

"I shall expect that every despatch will be used for forwarding the same, and I hold you responsible for an answer being delivered in these waters within five weeks from this day."†

The Commodore at the same time wrote an account of his proceedings to the Governor-General of India, which he sent off to Calcutta by a steamer in charge of Captain Latter.

The list of grievances presented to the Commodore by the British residents was a long one, for it contained no less than 38 items. No one in his senses would have attached any importance to this document, for it bore no signatures of those who were alleged to have been the aggrieved persons and was curiously enough mostly without dates. But any stick is good enough to beat a dog with. So the list of alleged grievances which Cobden called "absurd" was considered sufficient to pick a quarrel with the Burmese Government.§

* *Ibid.*, p. 35.

† *Ibid.*, p. 36.

§ Regarding these alleged grievances of the British residents at Rangoon, Ellenborough, who himself as Governor-General of India knew how to get up wars in India, observed from his place in the House of Lords on February 6th 1852 :

"He also wished to know whether, before any requisition was sent to the King of Ava for reparation for the injuries inflicted on British subjects in Rangoon any trustworthy officer of ours was sent there to ascertain the truth of their representations, and the extent of the injuries inflicted ? He could recollect—it was not so distant an era—he could recollect the circumstances of a complaint which was brought under the notice of the British Government, by a certain Don Pacifico. Athens rejoiced in one Pacifico ; but he could assure their lordships that there were dozens of Pacificos at Rangoon. If there were not the grossest ignorance of or the strangest misrepresenta-

The demand which Commodore Lambert had made on the Governor of Rangoon "for an answer being delivered" to him "within five weeks from this day" (*i.e.*, 28th November), was complied with, for it arrived on the New Year's day, being a day within the limited time. The Buddhist sovereign of Burma, not desirous to go to war with the Christian Government of India, for he was conscious of his weakness, was quite willing and ready to accede to all the demands which had been made on him. To show his sincerity, he disgraced the Governor of Rangoon by recalling him and sending another nobleman to replace him. The Commodore even admitted that the King was sincere. On the 1st of January, 1852, he wrote to the Government of India that

"the Burmese Government have dismissed the Governor of Rangoon, and promised to settle the demand made on them by the Government of India.

"I am of opinion that the King is sincere, and that his Government will fully act up to what he has promised."*

But this would not have served the purpose of the gallant Christian Commodore and so he tried to pick a quarrel with the new Governor, who arrived at Rangoon on the 4th January. The next day Commodore Lambert

"sent Mr. Edwards, the assistant-interpreter, to ascertain when it would be convenient for him to receive an officer with a letter stating the nature of the claims which the Government of British India had made on that of Burmah, and to say that when all had been adjusted he should do himself the honour of personally paying his respects to him ; the reply to which was that the Governor was ready at any time to receive communications from him ; and the following day was fixed."†

At the instance of Mr. Edwards, the new Governor removed the embargo by which the inhabitants of Rangoon had been prevented from holding communication with the boats of the squadron. Referring to this act of the new Governor, Cobden very truly observes :

"It is important that this fact should be borne in mind as an answer to the vague statements, for which no official proofs are afforded, that the new Governor had, on his first arrival, by his proclamation and other acts, shown an unfriendly disposition towards the British residents."§

On the 6th January,

tions about Rangoon, on the part of those who have written about it, Rangoon was the sink of Asia—the Alsatia to which all men went who could not keep a footing elsewhere. Persons of European origin, who had discovered that Asia was too hot to hold them, lived in Ava, and generally went to Rangoon, and there under the same, or perhaps some other name, endeavoured to gain a new reputation or a new fortune. He should not wish the Government to take any political measures with regard to Ava, without sending an officer there to inquire into the circumstances. He regretted that this had not been done in the first instance ; for it was reported that when the Commodore was sent to Rangoon with his flee, he found circumstances very different from those which had been represented to him. The Don Pacificos pushed off their boats, and went on board with representations of the damage which they said they had sustained." (*Ibid.*, p. 38.)

* P. 43, *Ibid.*

† Burmah Papers, 1852, p. 36. (Pp. 44-45, *Ibid.*)

§ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

"the Commodore directed Captain Fishbourne, commanding Her Majesty's steamer *Hermes* Captain Latter, and two officers of the *Hermes*, with Mr. Edwards, to proceed and deliver to the Governor the letter containing the demands he was charged to make. Captain Latter was at the time on board the *Proserpine*, finishing the Burmese translation of the letter which was to be given to the Governor ; and to give him due warning of their approach, on his own responsibility, as there was no time to spare, he sent Mr. Edwards on shore to him, to give notice of their coming, and charged him to say that, as he had already shown his friendly feelings by his amicable expressions of the day before, with reference to the time of receiving a communication from Commodore Lambert, there would be no necessity for making any display in receiving them, so that there could be no necessity for any delay."*

The Governor had consented to receive a *communication* and not *a deputation* from the Commodore, for no previous arrangement had been come to for its reception. Cobden says :

"To all who are acquainted with the customs of the East, and the childlike importance which Oriental nations, and especially the Burmese, attach to the ceremonial of visits, it must be evident that the course about to be pursued was pretty certain to end unsatisfactorily. The Governor had expressed his readiness to receive a *communication, not a deputation,* from Commodore Lambert, and he had entreated the clerk of the interpreter to bring it himself. Mr. Edwards could run in and out of his house freely, as bearer either of a message or letter, because, for a person of his inferior rank, no formal reception was necessary ; . . . An Englishman, in such a dilemma, would order his servant to tell an unbidden caller he was 'not at home.' In the East, if the unwelcome visitor present himself in the middle of the day the answer is, 'My master is asleep ."

The deputation who were bearers of the letter from the Commodore

"landed at about noon, and proceeded to Mr. Birrell's house to procure horses to take them up, as the distance was too much to walk in the sun."†

Regarding the letter, Cobden writes and he has put these words in italics :

"There was nothing in the contents of the letter which in the slightest degree called upon the writer to force the Governor to receive it by the hands of a deputation."

Of course it was not possible for the Governor of Rangoon to have received the deputation without previous arrangement. Cobden justly says :

What should we think of an American deputation who required us to dispense with our Lord Chamberlain, Gold-sticks, and Beef-eaters, and receive them after the simple fashion of the White House at Washington ? Might we not probably doubt if they were sober ?"

But the British Commodore considered the non-reception of the deputation and of their

"having been kept waiting for a full quarter of an hour in the sun"

a very sufficient cause of going to war with Burma. He did not consider it necessary to afford an opportunity to the Governor of Rangoon to explain or apologise for what had occurred or to refer the matter to the Government of India or that of Burma. It is recorded in the Parliamentary papers :

"The Commodore forthwith directed a boat to be sent to summon some of the English residents

* *Ibid.*, pp, 45-46.

† *Ibid.*, p. 47.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

from the shore. On their arrival, he warned them to be prepared to leave the town during the afternoon, and requested them to give notice to all other British subjects. . . .

"The British subjects, men, women, and children, to the amount of several hundred, took refuge during the afternoon on board the shipping in the river and before the evening had set in, the vessels had commenced dropping down the river. . . .

"It was dark before the Commodore issued orders to seize what was usually styled the Yellow Ship" *

which belonged to the sovereign of Burma and which was anchored a little above the squadron.

The very same day, the Commodore issued the notification of blockade in which he declared that

"In virtue of authority from the Governor-General of India, I do hereby declare the rivers of Rangoon, the Bassein, and the Salween above Moulmein, to be in a state of blockade; and, with the view to the strict enforcement thereof, a competent force will be stationed in, or near the entrance of the said rivers immediately."†

Regarding the above notification, Cobden says

"that there does not appear in the whole of the papers presented to Parliament one word or syllable of remonstrance or remark on the part of the Governor-General in vindication of his own authority—no, not even after Commodore Lambert, as if in very derision and mockery, had in his notification declared the coast in a state of blockade, '*in virtue of authority from the Governor-General of British India.*"§

But it never struck Cobden that Commodore Lambert might have possibly received secret instructions from the Governor-General of British India to enter upon hostilities with the Burmese nation. It is on this assumption only that we can explain his conduct and that of the Government of India towards the Burmese and also towards the Commodore. Writes Cobden :

"It is a most perplexing fact throughout these papers, that, although it is apparent that the Governor-General perceives the rashness of the acts of Commodore Lambert, . . . yet not one word falls from him to show that he was more than a passive looker-on at the contemptuous disregard of his own instructions !" (*Ibid.*, p. 60).

This goes to confirm our suspicion of the Commodore having received secret instructions from the Governor-General of India to pursue the course which he did and which precipitated the war with the Burmese. Of course, the conduct of the gallant Commodore can not be defended by any unprejudiced man or a lover of fair play. Even the writer of the article on the Burmese War in the *Calcutta Review* for July, 1852, who appears from internal evidence to be none else than Marshman,**

* Parliamentary Papers, 1852, p. 46.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 51-53.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

** Marshman is mentioned several times in General Sir William Sleeman's *Journey through Oude* (Bentley, 1858)—see vol. ii, pp. 390,397,—as the writer of "rabid articles" in favour of the absorption of Native States; and is stigmatised by Sir Henry Lawrence as "a perfect filibuster."—Kaye's *Lives of Indian Officers*, vol. II, p. 314.

Of course Marshman did not support Dalhousie's measure out of love for him. He was very

who, as the son of a clergyman, was brought up on the teaching of the Bible from his cradle and who, to exemplify that teaching of Christ which said "Do unto others," etc., was an unflinching supporter of Dalhousie's acts of spoliation, could not defend the Commodore. He wrote:

" We fully agree with Lord Dalhousie then, that Commodore Lambert could not pass over this act of studied contumely without notice. But to have noticed it *in some way* and to have avenged it *in the special way* in which Commodore Lambert did avenge it, are two things altogether different: ...As the King has so promptly disavowed the conduct of the previous Governor of Rangoon, we think he was entitled to an opportunity of stating whether he approved of the doings of this one; and it does seem to us that no evil would have resulted, if the Commodore had done all that he did, with the important exception of the seizure of the "Yellow Ship," and had made a peremptory demand of the King that he should command the Governor to proceed on board the *Fox*, . . .to make to Captain Fishbourne and the officers who had accompanied him, such an apology as Commodore Lambert should dictate to him. Whether the 'Golden Foot' would have acceded to this demand or not, we cannot determine. Very probably he would not; but his refusal would have put us into a more *comfortable* position in a national point of view than that which we actually occupy.

"The seizure of the King's ship was then the first act of war on our part."

Cobden observes:

"The conduct of the Governor of Rangoon is now a subject of minor importance—the question for the statesman, the historian, and the moralist is, were we justified, whatever his behaviour was, with the known friendly disposition of the King, in commencing war with the Burmese nation?*

Of course, no British author has ventured to answer this question.

Great was the apprehension of the inhabitants of Rangoon at the seizure of the King's "Yellow Ship." Writes Cobden:

"A covey of patridges with a hawk in view, ready to make its fell swoop, or a flock of sheep with a wolf's eyes glaring into the fold, could not shrink more timidly from that terrible and irresistible foe than did the Burmese officials at the prospect of a hostile collision with England, Captain Latter says that so great was their apprehension when the Commodore seized the King's ship that 'they even seemed alarmed for the safety of their own heads."†

In vain did the Burmese officials entreat the English Commodore to release the King's ship. In vain did the Governor of Rangoon send the Dallah Governor to the Commodore to plead for him and overlook his fault, if any. The Dallah Governor told the Commodore

amply rewarded for his writings. Thus Mr. J. L. Waller, in his evidence before the Select Committee on colonization in India on 8th June, 1858, being questioned,

"4988. Does it pay, as a mercantile speculation, to set up a newspaper to defend the Government in India?"

said,

"I can state that the proprietor of a paper which defended the Government has retired with a handsome fortune, . . . the "Friend of India" was notoriously, when I was in India, supporting the Government measures."

Of course, Marshman is alluded to in the above.

* *Ibid.*, p. 55.

† *Ibid.*, p. 61.

"that he had no doubt that when the King of Ava became acquainted with the insolent conduct of his subordinates to those who came to make a friendly communication, refusing to receive such communication, and thus jeopardising his throne, he would visit them with condign punishment.*"

But the Commodore was not moved by the entreaties and pleading of the Burmese officials. He towed away the King's ship, which caused great catastrophe. In the words of the Commodore:

'Her Majesty's steam-sloop *Hermes*, with the King of Ava's ship in tow, passed us at half past nine [January 10th], when the stockade opened a sharp cannonade on her Majesty's ship *Fox*, which was instantly returned with shot and shell, and the Burmese battery was in a short time silenced. On the smoke clearing away not a person was to be seen on the shore or in the boats.

"Our fire, I have no doubt, must have done great execution, for I have reason to believe that at least 3,000 men were opposed against us."

Commenting on the above, wrote Cobden :

"On the 6th, at night, Commodore Lambert seized the King's ship, which he held in his possession at anchor opposite the town for three days, during which time the Burmese made no attempt to retake it; but on the contrary, conciliatory visits were paid to the Commodore by the authorities of the highest rank in the neighbourhood, ... There is no reason to suppose that any act of hostility would have been committed had the King's ship been merely kept at anchor in the power of the British. But to have allowed a Burmese ship of war to be towed out of the river by foreigners, passing under the great stockade or battery without molestation, would have involved the disgrace and destruction of those who were responsible to the King of Ava for the protection of his property."§

Technically, the Burmese fired the first shot. This is exactly what the Commodore and his officers were longing for. For, this furnished them with the handle to go to war with that Buddhist nation. Cobden has put the case very vividly when he says :—

"Let us suppose that, instead of Rangoon, the scene of these operations had been at Charleston .... A ship of war belonging to the Government of the United States, lying at Charleston, is instantly seized and, notwithstanding notice was given that, if an attempt should be made to carry her off, the Commodore's ships would be fired upon from the shore, she is towed out to sea, the American battery opening fire as they pass and receiving in return a broadside which does 'great execution.' What would have been the response to this news when it reached England ? Can any one doubt that one unanimous cry would have been raised for the disgrace and punishment of Commodore Lambert ? And why is a different standard of justice applied in the case of Burmah ? Ask your own conscience, reader, if you be an Englishman, whether any better answer can be given than that America is powerful, and Burmah weak."**

We suggest another answer. It is that the conscience of a European people is such an unknown and unknowable quantity that its existence is probably to be doubted when dealings with non-European nations are concerned.

Cobden then proceeds :

"It might be expected that, having carried off a ship of war and killed a number of the

* Parliamentary papers, p. 43.

† *Ibid.*, p. 41,

§ *Ibid.*, p. 66,

** *Ibid.*, pp. 67-69.

Burmese force, sufficient 'satisfaction' had been obtained for a claim of £920. But the coast of Burmah was still declared in a state of blockade."

Referring to the correspondence which took place between the Buddhist Burmese and the Christian English regarding the release of the King's ship and the conduct of the Governor of Rangoon, Cobden was forced to write:

"The common sense and logic of the above correspondence, as well as its philanthropic sentiments, present, I am sorry to say, a most favourable contrast to the Christian side of this correspondence."†

Dalhousie was addressed by the Governor of Rangoon, through his Secretary Mr. (afterwards Sir Frederick) Halliday. The Governor's letter elicited the following remarks from Cobden:

"The letters of the Burmese authorities, translated into English, be it remembered, by hostile pen, are remarkable for their terseness and clear common sense, and offer a striking contrast to the lengthy, rambling and inconclusive reasoning which characterises the British part of the correspondence."§

The Governor's letter to Halliday, dated Rangoon, February 2nd, 1852, concluded as follows:

"Therefore, as soon as the officer which the Government of India is prepared to appoint, in conformity with existing treaties, shall arrive, a satisfactory and amicable arrangement can be made of the payment of the 9,948 rupees extorted from Captains Lewis and Shepperd; also with reference to the re-delivery of the King of Ava's ship, seized by Commodore Lambert.

"With reference to the question of the disrespect said to have been shown to the deputation sent with a letter by Commodore Lambert, it should be borne in mind that the English officers have been stating their own version of the case, and consequently, whilst shielding themselves, they have thrown all the blame on the other side."**

But the Scotch Governor-General was thirsty to taste the blood of the Burmese. He was not inclined to maintain peace with the Burmese. Writes Cobden:

"No sooner did it (the Rangoon Governor's letter) reach the Governor-General of India than he (with the Burmese ship of war still in his power) resolved to 'exact reparation by force of arms.' Orders were given for fitting out an armed expedition, and he now proclaimed as his ultimatum that, in addition to a compliance with the preceding demands, the Burmese should be compelled, as the price of peace, in consideration of the expenses of the expedition, and of compensation for property,' to pay ten lacs of rupees, or one hundred thousand of pounds."††

Regarding the "Minute", an extract from which only is published in the Parliamentary papers, which Dalhousie wrote on the occasion, Cobden says:

"It has none of the dignity or force which properly belongs to a State paper. It dwells with a minuteness quite feminine upon details respecting points of ceremonial, and breaches of ceremonial, breaches of etiquette; but in arguing the main questions at issue the 'Minute,' in its present form must be pronounced an unstatesmanlike, immoral, and illogical production."§§

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* *Ibid.*, p. 69.
† *Ibid.*, p. 71.
§ *Ibid.*, p. 76.
** *Ibid.*, p. 77.
†† *Ibid.*, p. 78.
§§ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

Cobden then proceeds to demonstrate the unstatesmanlike, immoral and illogical nature of the Minute. He writes :

"He (Lord Dalhousie) knew that an interval of thirty-five days was required for the receipt of an answer to a despatch sent to Ava from Rangoon, and there was the additional time necessary for sending a steamer from Rangoon to Calcutta, which with delays, could not fairly be calculated at less than another week, making together forty-two days. Now from January 7th, the date of Commodore Lamberts' letter, to February 12th, the date of the 'Minute,' is just thirty-six days; so that this hostile expedition against the Burmese nation was resolved upon before sufficient time had been allowed to the King to offer the explanation which he had been invited to give. A letter from the King was,… on its way, and actually reached the Governor-General's hands within a week of the date of his 'Minute'.

"But the unstatesmanlike fault (to use the mildest term) of the 'Minute' lies in this that, whereas the specific charges are directed against the Governor of Rangoon and him only, an assumption pervades the whole argument that the Burmese *Government* is the offending party: hence the vague and confused phraseology which sometimes speaks of the 'King,' in some places of "Burmah," and in others of the 'Governor of Rangoon.'…

"The offence offered to the majesty and power of England, in keeping the deputation waiting in the sun 'a full quarter of an hour,' is dicussed in all its bearings; *but there is not one syllable of allusion to the fact that Commodore Lambert had, in the teeth of instructions to the contrary, carried off a Burmese vessel of war, and done 'great execution' among those who attempted to oppose him.*"*

The war being resolved upon, it was prosecuted with great execution and slaughter of the Burmese. Cobden writes :

"A war it can hardly be called. A rout, a massacre, or a visitation, would be a more appropriate term. A fleet of war-steamers and other vessels took up their position in the river, and on the 11th April, 1852, *being Easter Sunday*, they commenced operations by bombarding both the Rangoon and Dallah shores. Everything yielded like toywork beneath the terrible broadsides of our ships… . There is small room for the display of courage where there is little risk; ….."†

There is no necessity of describing in detail the operations of the Second Burmese War. When the war was over a very large territory was wrested from the sovereign of Burma and annexed to the jurisdiction of the Government of India. Writes Cobden :

"These wars *are carried on at the expense of the people of India*…….What exclusive interest had the half-naked peasant of Bengal in the settlement of the claims of Captains Shepperd and Lewis, that he should alone be made to bear the expense of the war which grew out of them ?"…§

"Lord Dalhousie begins with a claim on the Burmese for less than a thousand pounds; which is followed by the additional demand of an apology from the Governor of Rangoon for the insult offered to our officers; next his terms are raised to one hundred thousand pounds, and an apology from the king's ministers; then follows the invasion of the Burmese territory; when, suddenly, all demands for pecuniary compensation and apologies cease, and his Lordship is willing to accept the cession of Pegu as a 'compensation' and 'reparation' for the past……"**

The reasons which led Dalhousie to annex Pegu are thus set forth by the *Friend*

* *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

† *Ibid.*, p. 98.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

** *Ibid.*, p. 104.

(1) *of India,* which as said before, was his lordship's organ. Wrote the above-mentioned journal :

"In making Pegu British, we take from the kingdom of Burma its chief financial resources, and its political strength ; we deprive it of the sinews of war. It is to this prostration of the power of the Burmese, and the dread inspired in the Court by our own power, that we must look for the security of our new border-line. For the last twenty-five years, they have occupied the territory lying between our own provinces of Arracan and of Moulmein. A line of hills separates the former from Pegu: but there are three or four passes, through which a barbarian army, unencumbered with artillery and commissariat stores, might at any time have invaded the province, while Moulmein has always been open to incursion."

The nations of Europe are worshippers of gold. Pegu was supposed to be, rich in gold mines. One Rev. F. Mason, M. A., in his work on "Tenasserim; or Notes on the Fauna, Flora, Minerals, and Nations of British Burmah, and Pegu" wrote of gold being plentiful in Pegu. According to him

"all the streams from the lofty granite mountains bring down their tribute of the precious metal." "There is a rumour widely current in Burmah, that valuable mines are known to the Burmese Court; but the secret is strictly guarded, because the treasures of the earth are regarded as a kind of royal reserve-fund, only to be drawn upon in great emergencies."

Mason tried to prove that Pegu was the Ophir of Solomon; the Talains called it *Subarnabhumi.* He wrote:

"The ancient name of the Moubee, in the delta of the Irrawady, was Suvanna-nadee, or 'river of gold'; indicating that Pegu was famous in antiquity for its gold; and gold and silver appear to have been much more abundant than they are now, even three centuries ago." "The Sanskrit form of Suvanna is *suvarna*; and this, when the final syllable is dropped, is nearly identical with Soupheir, the Greek name of Ophir."

No wonder that the mammon-worshipping Governor-General could not resist the temptation of annexing Pegu to British India.

The subjugation of the Burmese was not an easy matter. Writes Ludlow:

"Pegu, after official annexation, was over-run with so-named robbers, declaring that if they had to give up the country to us it should be as a desert. The Peguese bitterly asked if this was to be our protection. Fortunately for us, an internal revolution broke-out in Ava; a more peaceful monarch was set on the throne. But though peace was nominally re-established, quiet was not, so late as April, 1855."*

The Second Burmese War was the last war fought by the East India Company which resulted in the augmentation of their territory.

British India, Vol. II, pp. 185-186.

APPENDIX

Cobden, in a footnote to the last page of his pamphlet, has given the following extract from a speech delivered by General Cass in the Senate of the United States, December, 1852 :

"Another of the native Powers of Hindostan has fallen before the march of a great commercial corporation and its 8,000,000 or 10,000,000 of people have gone to swell the immense congregation of British subjects in India. And what do you think was the cause of the war which has just ended in the swallowing up of the kingdom of Burmah? The whole history of human contests, since the dispersing of the family of man upon the plains of Shinar, exhibits no such national provocation, followed by such national punishment. Political arithmetic contains no such sum as that which drove England to this unwelcome measure. Had we not the most irrefragable evidence, we might well refuse credence to this story of real rapacity. But the fact is indisputable that England went to war with Burmah, and annihilated its political existence, for the non-payment of the disputed demand of £ 990. So says the London *Times*, the authoritative expositor of the opinions and policy of England. 'To appreciate,' says the impersonation of British feeling, 'correctly the character of this compulsory bargain, the reader must recollect that the sum originally demanded of the Burmese for the indemnification of our injured merchants was £990, and Lord Dalhousie's terms, even when the guns of our steamers were pointed against Rangoon, comprehended, in consideration of the expenses of the expedition and of compensation for property, a claim only of £100,000.' *Well does it become such a people to preach homilies to other nations upon disinterestedness and moderation.*"

CHAPTER LXXXVI

DALHOUSIE'S ACQUISITIONS BY FRAUD

During Lord Dalhousie's tenure of office as Governor-General of India only two wars were fought which resulted in the annexation of the Panjab and a portion of Burma. But in wiping out the independent existences of many other principalities and native States of India, he did not appeal to the sword. To accomplish his object, he had to resort to fraud and not to force. Writes Kaye:

"He (Dalhousie) had then done with foreign wars: his after-career was one of peaceful invasion. Ere long there was a word which came to be more dreaded than that of Conquest. The native mind is readily convinced by the inexorable logic of the sword. There is no appeal from such arbitration. To be invaded and to be conquered is a state of things appreciable by the inhabitant of India. It is his "kismat," his fate; God's will. One stronger than he cometh and taketh all that he hath. There are, however, manifest compensations. His religion is not invaded; his institutions are not violated. Life is short, and the weak man, patient and philosophical, is strong to endure and mighty to wait. But Lapse is a dreadful and an appalling word; for it pursues the victim beyond the grave. Its significance in his eyes is nothing short of eternal condemnation."*

The word "lapse" had a peculiar meaning in the history of India in the fifties of the last century. It meant that those native states which entered into an alliance with the English power of India were to lose their very existence at the sweet will of the alien Governor-General. It was Edmund Burke who, in his speech on the 1st December, 1783, on the motion for going into a Committee on Mr. Fox's India Bill, said :

"I engage myself to you to make good three positions; First, I say, that from Mount Imaus (Himalaya) . . . . . where it touches us in the latitude of twenty-nine, to Cape Comorin, in the latitude of eight, that there is not a single prince, state, or potentate, great or small, in India, with whom they have come into contact, whom they have not sold."

The above was not altogether declamatory language which orators are in the habit of indulging in—language in which truth is sacrificed to make impressions on an audience by mere rhetorical expressions. No, every word of what Burke said was true and its truth was very painfully exhibited in Dalhousie's regime. The descendants of those princes with whose help the English succeeded in establishing their power in this country were very shamefully treated and on their death their principalities annexed in the teeth of existing treaties on the ground of alleged want of heirs! This sort of annexation was given the euphemistic name of "lapse."

The three Mahratta principalities of Satara, Nagpur and Jhansi and four minor ones were thus annexed in the regime of Dalhousie.

Of course, to justify his unjust and unjustifiable acquisitions he resorted to hair-splitting distinctions as regards the classification of Native States. In a letter dated 13th June, 1854, he wrote to Sir Charles Wood :

"I had a definite principle of distinction in my mind, and I think it is a sound one. There are three chief classes of Hindoo states in India.

"1st. . . . Hindu sovereignties which are not tributary and which are not and never have been subordinate to a paramount power;

* *Sepoy War*, Vol. I, 1880, p. 69.

2nd. . . . . Hindu sovereignties and chiefships which are tributary, and which owe subordination to the British Government as their paramount, in the place of the Emperor of Delhi, the Peishwa, etc;

3rd. . . . Hindu sovereignties and chiefships created or revived by the Sanad (grant) of the British Government.

"Over principalities of the first class I contend that we have no power whatever, and have no right, except that of might, over their adoptions.

"Principalities of the second class require our assent to adoption, which we have a right to refuse, but which policy would usually lead us to concede."

"In the principalities of the third class I hold that succession should never be allowed to go by adoption."

Of course, no sensible man can find any essential distinction in the status of a native state of the 2nd or 3rd class mentioned by Dalhousie. Whatever the origin of a state, after its recognition as such, it should have been treated according to a uniform code of international law. But any pretext, however flimsy or plausible, was good enough with the Governor-General to swallow the native states of India.

Sir Charles Wood in replying to the above letter on the 9th of August, said :

"To prevent mistakes, I will tell you how I distinguish them.

"*First.* States which have from a time antecedent to our rule been independent or quasi-independent, not tributary or owing more than nominal allegiance to any superior.

"*Secondly.* States dating from a similar period, but owing their origin distinctly to a grant from some authority to which we have succeeded, and tributary.

"*Thirdly.* States owing their origin to our grant or gift.

"In the first class I apprehended that an adoption properly made ought, as a matter of course, to be recognised. In the second, we may or may not recognise it as we choose, recognition being the general practice. In the third, if heirs fail, according to the terms of our grant, we annex."

Of course, in the above correspondence we do not perceive any expression of so-called generosity or philanthropy. When political expediency necessitated the creation or revival of a state, its existence was not to be governed by the rules and customs of the tribe to which the ruling prince belonged but by the arbitrary policy of the alien rulers. Its extinction was to be apprehended at any moment. Had not the Indian Mutiny taken place in 1857, the fate of all the Native States of India would have been sealed. For it was as far back as 1834, that the Court of Directors of the East India Company had laid down their policy in regard to adoptions in these terms :

"Whenever it is optional with you to give or to withhold your consent to adoptions, the indulgence should be the exception and not the rule, and should never be granted but as a special mark of approbation."

The Court of Directors did not classify the native states as Dalhousie did, and so it is not too much to say that the native states would one and all have been annexed on the ground of alleged failure of heir and by lapse. Before Dalhousie's time several states had been annexed on the so-called ground of "lapse"—states which certainly were not "created or revived by the sanad (grant) of the British Government." The principalities of Kolaba, Mandavi and Ambala were annexed and treated as "lapses" by Dalhousie's predecessors.

The first Indian principality which Dalhousie treated as a "lapse" was the State of Satara

CHAPTER LXXXVII

THE ANNEXATION OF SATARA

Robert Knight, in his pamphlet on the Inam Commissision Unmasked wrote :

"Bajee Rao the last Peishwa.

"The circumstances under which Mr. Elphinstone's proclamation of 1818, guaranteeing the landholders of the Peishwa's territories in their possessions, was promulgated, must first come under review. When that manifesto was issued, the power of Bajee Rao, the Peishwa, was yet unbroken; while the assurances it breathed, and the reputation of our Government for scrupulous adherence to its engagements, were among the most powerful causes which contributed to his ruin. It is hard to say whether the Mahrattas or our own Government attached the more importance to the appearance of that manifesto. It was carefully timed upon the fall of Satara up to which date the pursuit of the Peishwa had been productive of nothing important, if we except the political effect of holding him up as a fugitive in the eyes of the country. The repulse at Kirkee, and the stand of the grenadiers at Korygaom, were all the successes of the campaign; and the historian of the war has distinctly affirmed that, in the various skirmishes which ensued, no advantageous result had been gained by either party. The truth is, we fought Bajee Rao first with the proclamation, and then with the Satara family, which most opportunely fell into our hands at Ashtah, some ten days after its appearance. The assurances of the proclamation, and the reinstatement of the Rajah of Satara, ruined the Peshwa; and our deliberate withdrawal now from the pledges then given, merits the reprobation of every conscientious man, however specious the argument upon which the withdrawal has been recommended."*

Mounstuart Elphinstone had to recognise the descendant of Sivaji as the ruler of the Mahrattas, otherwise it would have been impossible for him and the British to make the people of the Deccan give up the cause of the fugitive Peshwa Baji Rao. But after getting the Satara prince in his clutches he did not fulfil all those promises which he had made to him.† The name of the Satara prince was Pratap Singh. He was a minor when he was used as a tool by the British to

* The Inam Commission Unmasked, by Robert Knight, pp. 45-46.

† The following will show the nature of the promises made to the Satara prince.

In a *bakhar* or historical sketch written by one Balwant Rao Chitnavis, which was translated into English by Dr. Milne, who had retired from the service of the East India Company as President of the Medical Board of Bombay, it is stated that, after the British Government had formed an alliance with Baji Rao, an agent was deputed to the Governor-General to solicit that the management of the country might be made over to the Raja and was informed that the request could not be acceded to until the existing treaty had been violated when his Highness might rest assured "that he being the possessor of the dominion it should revert to him." In this "Historical" sketch, Mr. Elphinstone's breach of faith is referred to. He is said to have promised that in case the Peishwa violated the treaty or levied war, then his Highness the Maharaja should be confident of his word, which he had just pledged for the restoration of his government, requesting that this promise might not transpire.

That Elphinstone never contradicted the abovementioned statements, although these were published while he was alive, surely proves their genuineness.

serve their purpose. After Baji Rao had made his submission and was granted a pension and jagir at Bithur, Pratap Singh was recognised by the British as the sovereign of Satara. Captain Grant Duff was appointed Resident at his court and he was to conduct the affairs of the State during the minority of the Prince. When the Prince attained majority and became the ruler of his principality, he was found to be a very intelligent and shrewd man and far above the average of Indian princes. It was a certain Roman who used the metaphorical expression of cutting off tall poppies. Prince Pratap Singh was a tall poppy in the estimation of the Governor of Bombay—Sir Robert Grant, a son of that Charles Grant who was the reputed "Christian Director of the East India Company." So he issued the fiat to crush Pratap Singh. And it was done. The prince was deposed and sent in captivity to Benares. His brother was appointed ruler of Satara in his stead.

Towards 1848 both the brothers died. Unfortunately none of them had any male child. But both the brothers had, according to Hindu Law, adopted sons who possessed every right to inherit the sovereignty of Satara. But Satara was annexed on the plausible plea that there was no legal heir to its throne.* Scotch logic was made use of to come to this conclusion. But the real reason for this act of spoliation and gross violation of all treaties with Satara has been mentioned by Sir William Lee-Warner,† who writes :

"It must also be noted that while Lord Dalhousie's mind was yet open, the very first letter which he received at Calcutta from Hobhouse, dated the 24th December, 1847, contained this obvious incitement to annexation :

"The death of the ex-Raja of Satara certainly comes at a very opportune moment. The reigning Raja is, I hear, in very bad health, and it is not at all impossible we may soon have to decide upon the fate of his territory. I have a very strong opinion that on the death of the present prince without a son, and no adoption should be permitted, this petty principality should be merged in the British Empire; and if the question is decided in my "day of sextonship," I shall leave no stone unturned to bring about that result. But, of course, I should like to have your opinion on the subject."

The ex-convict Hobhouse who indited the above letter was an uncle of Dalhousie.

*W. M. Torrens, M. P., wrote:

"Treaties have throughout all time been for the most part brief in language, general in the terms employed, and confessedly intended, not as exhaustive anticipations of all imaginable contingencies, but as laying down broadly, and in simple forms of speech, the outlines of peace and amity; upon the implied condition that the application of these terms to any and every case that might thereafter arise should be such as the common understanding of both communities would admit, or the judgment of an impartial arbiter declare. Tested by this obvious rule of international right the guarantee of perpetual inheritance was undoubtedly intended, and undoubtedly understood, to imply the devolution of title, dignity and power to whatever heirs could from time to time establish their respective claims,—not according to the *lex loci* of the foreign and alien party to the compact, but according to the *lex loci* of the state whose autonomy the treaty had been confessedly framed to assure." (*Empire in Asia, how we came by it: a book of confessions*, p. 357 ; Panini Office reprint.)

†Life of Lord Dalhousie, Vol II, p. 138.

And the Scotch "Laird of Cockpen" was very glad to do all that his ex-convict uncle desired him to do. Commenting on the above letter, Lee-Warner writes:

"Did ever Governor-General enter upon a line of policy with stronger pressure from higher authority ?"

Of course, had Dalhousie been an honest man, he would not have felt bound to obey the mandate of the higher authority. But the conscience of the statesmen of England and Scotland could not be relied upon when Indian questions were to be decided.

Of course, there was no justice or honesty in the step which Dalhousie took or was made to take in annexing Satara. The partisans of annexation, who were mostly Scotch, like the Duke of Argyll, Sir Louis Jackson, &c., say that no wrong was committed in thus acquiring that principality and incorporating it with the British Raj. With them the end justifies the means and so they do not scruple to resort to any act of occidental diplomacy based on Machiavellian policy to serve their purpose. Wrote one Anglo-Indian author:

"States, or bodies politic, are to be considered as moral persons, having a public will, capable and free to do right and wrong, inasmuch as they are collections of individuals, each of whom carries with him into the service of the community the same binding law of morality and religion which ought to control his conduct in private life. The Law of Nations is a complex system composed of various ingredients. It consists of general principles of right and justice, equally suitable to the government of individuals in a state of natural equality, and to the relations and conduct of nations; of a collection of usages, customs, and opinions, the growth of civilisation and commerce; and of a code of positive law."*

Maine quotes an American jurist, who writes:

"The Law of Nations, unlike foreign Municipal Law, does not have to be proved as a fact. The Law of Nations makes an integral part of the laws of the land. Every nation, on being received at her own request into the circle of civilised governments, must understand that she not only attains rights of sovereignty and the dignity of national character, but that she binds herself also to the strict and faithful observance of all those principles, laws, and usages which have obtained currency amongst civilised states, and which have for their object the mitigation of the miseries of war."†

The Satara Raj did not pay any tribute to the British Government. In the petition submitted to the Queen Victoria, in 1874, the widowed Rani of Satara made out a strong case, showing that the Satara Raj was an independent State just like Switzerland, and so the British Government had no right to interfere with the laws and customs which regulated its succession.

The annexation of Satara was the first one carried out by Dalhousie on the doctrine of what he was pleased to euphemistically call "lapse." Yes, it was "lapse" of all morals on the part of the British rulers and not of heirs of the prince, which brought the Satara Raj under the yoke of those rulers.

For further details regarding the Satara question or questions, see my *Story of Satara.*

* Sir Henry S. Maine's Lectures on International Law, p. 33.

† *Ibid.*, p. 37.

CHAPTFR LXXXVIII

ANNEXATION OF NAGPUR

The annexation of Satara served as a precedent to the Scotch "Laird of Cockpen" to annex Nagpur in 1854. The last Raja of Nagpur, named Raghuji Bhonsla the 3rd, died on the 11th December, 1853, without leaving a son. And this served as an excuse for the "swallowing up" of this State by the Governor-General. From all the accounts which we have of this last Raja, it is evident that he was an intelligent prince and that he governed his principality well. Yet Dalhousie was not ashamed in writing of this Raja after his death as "having lived and died a seller of justice, a miser, a drunkard, and a debauchee." Of course, it was all false; but it served the purpose of the Governor-General to write like this. Otherwise no case could have been made out for this spoliation.

On the death of the Raja, his grandmother, the widow of Raghuji Bhonsla the 2nd, who had been regent during the minority of the last Raja, adopted the deceased Raja's grandnephew, named Yeshwunt Rao Aher Rao. The widows of the Raja also gave their consent to this adoption. The ceremonies of adoption were performed and the funeral rites of the deceased sovereign were celebrated by his adopted son.

The Resident, Mr. Mansel, would, as an occidental diplomatist, neither forbid nor give any "special encouragement" to the adoption until he received orders from the supreme government on the subject.* Dalhousie on the 28th January, 1854, recorded a minute in which he declared that the sovereignty of Nagpur had "lapsed to the paramount power, for there was no heir or representative of the Bhonsla family or even a claimant to the throne of Nagpur." The Scotch lord conveniently ignored all the assurances which had been given to the House of Nagpur by the Government whom he represented in India. The treaty contracted by the Government of India with that of Nagpur was one of "perpetual friendship and alliance" and the State of Nagpur was officially declared in 1826 to be "one of the substantive powers of India."

As a substantive power of India, the Nagpur sovereign or his representative could adopt a son on the failure of a male issue according to the customary laws of his tribe and religion. Colonel Sutherland, Governor-General's Agent in Central India, in a letter dated 25th August, 1841, gives the following opinion with reference to adoption :

> "There may be some difference of opinion on the subject of the right of a widow to adopt a son, where she was not enjoined or permitted to do so by her husband ; where she had his authority, her right to do so would not, I think, be questioned anywhere in Rajpootana ; and even where she had not his authority, her right would, I think, in most cases be recognised : the adoption being of course made *from the nearest of kin to her deceased husband,* although even in this respect great latitude is allowed."

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* First Nagpur Blue-book, 1854, p. 56.

Major Evans Bell in the chapter on the Right of Adoption in his work "The Empire in India"* writes :

"Sir Richard Jenkins, in his Nagpore Report of 1827 (p. 146) declares the rule that had been observed in seating the Rajah, then a minor, on the throne, and that should be observed in choosing his successor from the female line, in case he should die without leaving a son. That rule was to choose the nearest male descendant of the last Rajah who had any.' According to that rule the late Rajah's grand-nephew, the great grandson of Rughojee the second's daughter and that Rajah's nearest male descendant, was chosen and adopted as a son, on the death of his grand-uncle, the late Rughojee the 3rd of Nagpore. Lord Dalhousie, without inquiry or notice, declared the Bhonsla family to be extinct, and the Nagpore State to have lapsed for want of an heir."

In anothor portion of the same work from which the above extract is given, Major Bell writes :

"In the year 1844 the Governor-General in Council, in reply to the Resident Colonel Spiers' request for instructions in the event of the Rajah dying without issue, made a distinct recognition of the right of adoption by the Rajah, and by members of the family in case of his death without having made an adoption. The passage to which I allude is the more worthy of attentive consideration, because it is quoted in Lord Dalhousie's Minute, p. 26, as a proof that the question of adoption was *'left open'* by the Government of India. But the passage will not bear such a construction. It is as follows :

'In the event of the death of the present Rajah without leaving children, or *an adopted son,* you should make arrangements for conducting the Government of Nagpore, pending the orders of the Government of India, which orders will be based on the circumstances that may present themselves at the time, *and the right to make the adoption which might be considered to attach to any surviving member of the Rajah's family.*

"The right of the Rajah himself to adopt a successor (*which Lord Dalhousie denied*) is here clearly recognised while, to say the least, no doubt, no hint of disapproval is thrown out against the contingent right of the widow or other surviving relative to adopt on behalf of the deceased Rajah. The ordered reference to Calcutta in such a case is obviously intended to guard against a disputed adoption, but conveys no doubt as to the general right."†

To quote the same author again :

"The Ranees of Nagpore were treated in exactly the same manner as those of Satara. They were never invited to express an opinion on the subject of the succession ; and the grounds of the decision of Government, annihilating their sovereignty and their family, were never communicated to them. They were abruptly told that there was no heir to the musnud, and that the Rajah's dominions had 'reverted to the British Government', and not another word of explanation was vouchsafed to them. A year or so after the annexation, they were able, in common with the general public, to inspect Lord Dalhousie's minute of the 28th January, 1854, penned about a month after the Raja's death, in which his grand-nephew and heir their adopted son, is styled 'a Maratha youth,' and a 'stranger,' and in which without any inquiry having been made, without any facts or information whatever, but by a purely *a priori* argument,—. . . . . Lord Dalhousie proved to the satisfaction of Mr. Halliday and Mr. Dorin, that the Ranees' natural jealousies, their feelings and interest,' *must* make them averse to the continuance of the Raj in the person of an adopted son, and it would really be inhuman to encourage them to adopt.§

* P. 144.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 200-201.

§ *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

There was one member of the Governor-General's Council, by name General Low, who was opposed to the annexation of Nagpur. He protested against the minute of Lord Dalhousie proclaiming the extinction of the Bhonsla State. In his minute his Scotch Lordship had used language which more befitted the lips of a Court jester or a dramatic actor than a statesman conducting the serious business of a kingdom. Dalhousie had written in his Minute :

"I am well aware that the continuance of the Raj of Nagpore under some Marhatta rule, as an act of grace and favour on the part of the British Government, would be highly acceptable to native sovereigns and nobles of India; and there are, doubtless, many of high authority who would advocate the policy on that special ground. I understand the sentiment and respect it; but remembering the responsibility that is upon me, I cannot bring my judgment to admit that a kind and generous sentiment should outweigh a just and prudent policy."

Of course no serious statesman would use language like that quoted above. The minute of General Low was a protest against Dalhousie's wild statements. Wrote that gallant military officer in his minute dated February 10, 1854:

"If Great Britain shall retain her present powerful position among the States of Europe, it seems highly probable that, owing to the infringement of their treaties on the part of native Princes and other causes, the whole of India will, in the course of time, become one British province; but many eminent statesmen have been of opinion that we ought most carefully to avoid unnecessarily accelerating the arrival of that great change; and it is within my own knowledge that the following five great men were of that number—namely, Lord Hastings, Sir Thomas Munro, Sir John Malcolm, the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, and Lord Metcalfe."

In the course of the same minute, he wrote again:

"When I went to Malwa, in 1850, where I met many old acquaintances, whom I had known when a very young man, and over whom I held no authority, I found these old acquaintances speak out much more distinctly as to their opinion of the Satara case; so much so, that I was, on several occasions, obliged to check them. It is remarkable that every native who ever spoke to me respecting the annexation of Satara, asked precisely the same question: 'What crime did the late Rajah commit that his country should be seized by the Company?' Thus clearly indicating their notions, that if any crime had been committed our act would have been justifiable, and not otherwise."

He also wrote that

"In one respect, the natives of India are exactly like the inhabitants of all parts of the known world; they like their own habits and customs better than those of foreigners."

Kaye, in the second chapter of the first volume of his great work, "A History of the Sepoy War in India," referring to Low's minute writes:

"Having thus in unmeasured opposition to the Dalhousie theory flung down the gauntlet of the old School at the feet of the Governor-General, Low ceased from the enunciation of general principles, and turned to the discussion of the particular case before him. He contended that the treaty between the British Government and the late Rajah did not limit the succession to heirs of his body, and that therefore, there was a clear title to succession in the Bhonslah family by means of a son adopted by either the Rajah himself or by his eldest widow, in accordance with law and usage. The conduct, he said, of the last Prince of Nagpore had not been such as to alienate his right; he had been loyal to the Paramount State, and his country had not been misgoverned: there had been nothing to call for military interference on our part, and little to compel grave remonstrance and rebuke. For what crime, then, was his line to be cut off and the honours of his house

extinguished for ever? To refuse the right of adoption in such a case would, he alleged, be entirely contrary to the spirit, if not to the treaty.

"Of such opinions as these Low expected no support in the Council-chamber of Calcutta—no support from the authorities at home.* It little mattered, indeed, what the latter might think, for the annexation of Nagpore was decreed and to be accomplished without reference to England."

So Nagpur was annexed and great indignities were inflicted on the widowed Ranis of the Palace. Almost all their jewels and other state as well as private furniture were seized and sold to the highest bidders. Writes Kaye:

"that which might soon have faded into an idea was rendered a galling and oppressive reality by the spoliation of the palace, which followed closely upon the extinction of the Raj. The live stock and dead stock of the Bhonslah were sent to the hammer.

"It must have been a great day for speculative cattle-dealers at Seetabaldee when the royal elephants, horses, and bullocks were sold off at the price of carrion, and a sad day, indeed, in the royal household, when the venerable Bankha Baee, with all the wisdom and moderation of four score well-spent years upon her, was so stung by a sense of the indignity offered to her, that she threatened to fire the palace if the furniture were removed. But the furniture was removed, and the jewels of the Bhonsla family, with a few propitiatory exceptions, were sent to the Calcutta market. And I have heard it said that these seizures, these sales, created a worse impression, not only in Berar, but in the surrounding provinces, than the seizure of the kingdom itself."

In a footnote Kaye writes:

"Between five and six hundred elephants, camels, horses, and bullocks were sold for £1300. The Ranees sent a protest to the Commissioner, and memorialised the Governor-General, alleging, in the best English that the Palace could furnish, that "on the 4th instant (Sept.) the sale of animals, *viz.*, bullocks, horses, camels, and elephants, commenced to sell by public auction and resolution—a pair of hackery bullocks, valued 100 rupees, sold in the above sale for 5 rupees."

But the secret reason for annexing the dominion of Nagpore was that which had prompted the Scotch Laird to wrest Berar from the Nizam. Nagpur was a great cotton producing province and there was possibility of developing or rather exploiting its resources by the natives of Great Britain. Writes Ludlow:

"It is clear……that the Nizam's cessions in 1853 led to the annexation of Nagpore in 1854. For, as Lord Dalhousie phrased it, the 'essential interest of England' required that the territory of

* Of course the authorities at home, those who called themselves Radicals or Liberals in politics, were in favor of absorbing the native states of India.

It should be borne in mind that the policy of annexations by lapse was the policy enunciated by the Liberals when in office in 1834. So Sir Charles Wood wrote on the 8th of March, 1854, to Dalhousie:

"You will have seen by a former letter that I encouraged your annexation of Nagpur, to which I have heard of no objection even from John Mill, who is the great supporter of Indian independence in the East India House."

On the 8th April Hogg wrote to Dalhousie:

"We shall probably have a discussion some time or other respecting Nagpur. There never was, and could not be a clearer case. Still Sullivan, at the dinner to Lord Harris, selected that occasion as appropriate for declaring his opinion that the annexation of Nagpur exceeded in iniquity the Russian aggression."

Of course, Sullivan spoke the truth, but this was unpalatable to the Liberal authorities at home, because they did not lose anything material and so perceptible by the physical senses, by encouraging their tool in India to annex territories on any flimsiest pretext whatever.

Nagpore should pass under British Government. The great field of supply of the best and cheapest cotton grown in India lies in the valley of Berar (ceded by the Nizam), and in 'the districts adjacent to it.' Those 'districts adjacent' were in Nagpore. During the past year, the Government had obtained by treaty with the Nizam, not the sovereignty indeed, but the perpetual possession and administration of the valley of Berar. This cottonfield, was, however, 'inaccessible for want of railroads' : the possession of Nagpore would enable us to make them. We took both, as has been seen." (Thoughts on the policy of the Crown towards India. Allahabad reprint).

From an article on the Central Provinces published in the *Calcutta Review* for 1863, written presumably by Sir Richard Temple, some of the real reasons for annexing Nagpore can be guessed. The writer says :—

"The policy of the Government of Lord Dalhousie has secured to us a province not much inferior to Oude or the Panjab in resources and superior to them in climate. It has given us a province which, with some extension, and under the direction of a master-mind, will be inferior to few others in British India. It contains some stations superior in climate to any others in India, those on the Himalayan ranges alone excepted. The elevations of the Vindhyan and Mahadeva ranges offer retreats, pleasant as any which could be found away from Simlah, Darjeeling or the Neelgherries.

"No one now wishes to see the old regime restored. . . .The policy of Mr. Mansel has long been forgotten, . . "

Then the writer refers to the difficulty that would have been experienced in conquering Nagpore. He writes :

"A kingdom constituted like that of Nagpore might have been difficult to conquer but when once annexed, ... was easy of retention. The officers of the King, were paid by him, were grateful to him, were dependent on him. *They were not easily seduced,* and the opposition they might make would be considerable. With the fall of the king, however, they were obliged to succumb, and no fears were entertained but from the other branches of the reigning family."*

The words italicised in the above extract tell their own tale. It would seem that the Britishers who prayed every day, "Lead us not into temptations but deliver us from all evils," must have tried the experiment of seducing the officers of the Nagpur Raj and because they failed in seducing them, they thought that the Nagpur Raj was growing strong and therefore it was necessary to annihilate its existence.

N. B.—Maior Evans Bell has discussed at great length the question of the annexation of Nagpur in his two works, *viz* :—"The Empire in India" and "Prospects and Retrospects of Indian Policy."

* *Calcutta Review*, Vol. XXXVIII (1863), pp. 230-231.

Laxmibai, Rani of Jhansi

Nana Sahab

CHAPTER LXXXIX

THE ANNEXATION OF JHANSI

Jhansi, a district in Bundelkhand, was in the times of the early Peshwas governed by an officer who was styled Subadar of Jhansi. He had only the temporary command of the district. "But one of them," to quote the words of the Marquess of Hastings, "who was a man of head as well as of courage, succeeded in making the soobadarship hereditary in his family, maintaining in other respects towards the Peishwa relations of fealty with some pecuniary payments."*

The British Indian Government negotiated a treaty with this hereditary Subadar of Jhansi in 1817. The treaty which was ratified by the Governor-General on the 18th day of November, 1817, distinctly laid down in its second article that

"The British Government, with a view to confirm the fidelity and attachment of the government of Jhansie consents to acknowledge and hereby constitutes Row Ram Chund, his heirs and successors, hereditary rulers of the territory enjoyed by the late Row Sheo Bhow at the period of the commencement of the British Government," etc.

The language of the article of the treaty does not certainly convey the idea of the British Government having made the grant of the territory of Jhansi to its then Subadar Row Ram Chund, or even if it did so, it did not stipulate that it would lapse to the British Government on the failure of heir of the body of the Subadar. But when the last Raja† of Jhansi died on the 21st November, 1853, the kinsman whom he had adopted as his son was not recognised by Dalhousie and so the principality was annexed owing to so-called "lapse." In a Minute, dated the 27th of February, 1854, in which Dalhousie proclaimed the annexation of Jhansi, he wrote :

"There is no heir of the body of the late Raja—there is no heir whatever of any Raja or Subedar of Jhansi with whom the British Government has at any time had relations : the late Raja was never expected by his own people to adopt, and a previous adoption by the Raja, whom the British Government constituted hereditary chief of Jhansi, was not acknowledged by the British Government. Wherefore it follows that the right to refuse to acknowledge the present adoption by Gangadhar Rao is placed beyond question."

It was convenient for the Governor-General to resort to lies and deliberate misrepresentation of facts in order to achieve his end. Major Evans Bell, in his two works on the *Empire in India* and *Prospects and Retrospect of Indian Policy*, has very thoroughly exposed the lies contained in Dalhousie's minute on annexation of Jhansi. He writes:

Of the regularity of the adoption in every point of view there never was any doubt or question raised. ... Indeed the adoption was recognised as regular and irreversible. ... The decision of

* Marquess of Hastings' Private Journal, p. 313, Panini Office Reprint.

† The title of Subadar was changed to that of Raja in 1832 during the *regime* of Lord William Bentinck.

the Government on that point is summed up in the following words, 'The adoption was good for the conveyance of private rights, though not for the transfer of the Principality.' ...

"... by the treaty of 1817, it was certainly not contemplated by either party to the treaty that the heir of a Soobadar of Jhansi could under any circumstances fail to be his successor. No other law was intended or thought of except the Hindu law of inheritance, in which adoption is an ordinary and essential incident. No article or stipulation in the treaty gave us the right to interfere with the operation of the Hindu law, to mutilate it or to substitute any other law of descent."*

Dalhousie, in the minute above referred to, quoted a memorandum written by Sir Charles Metcalfe in 1837 as an authority for the prerogative of confirming or invalidating adoption in dependent states. But Major Bell has no difficulty in exposing that Dalhousie was not honest in his citation of the authority of Metcalfe. For he wrote that Metcalfe's

"opinion, as may be very easily shown, was directly contradictory of that supposed imperial right.

"Lord Metcalfe, in reference to the Chiefs of Bundelcund, observes that there is a wide distinction to be drawn between 'sovereign princes' and 'jagheerdars,' between those in possession of hereditary sovereignties in their own right, and those who hold grants of land or public revenue, by gift from a sovereign or paramount power."

Then quoting *in extenso* from Metcalfe's memorandum, Bell wrote:

"It will be observed how restricted a right of resumption is allowed by Lord Metcalfe. Even in a case of Jagheerdars, he considers that the sovereign only has the power of refusing to sanction adoptions, when *'the terms of the grant limit succession to heirs male of the body.'* But although this paragraph is quoted by Lord Dalhousie in support of his argument for the annexation of Jhansi, it is obvious that it was intended to refer to a totally different class of possessions; and moreover, if Jhansi were reducible to the category of Jagheers or grants of land, there is no limitation of the grant, confining its 'succession to heirs male of the body'

"But the Rajah of Jhansi was clearly not a Jagheerdar, nor did he, as erroneously stated several times in the late Governor-General's Minute, hold his Principality as a grant; nor did either his father Sheo Rao Bhow, or his nephew Ram Chand Rao receive it as a 'gift' from the British Government."†

"There was no gift, because Ram Chand Rao was already in possession; there was no pretension to the relations of sovereign and subject, for there already existed relations of amity and defensive alliance; there was no grant made, no sunnud issued, but a new treaty was concluded between two states. The Rajah of Jhansi was not a Jagheerdar, 'but a hereditary ruler,' a Hindu Prince...."§

Referring to the adoption in 1835 which, Dalhousie wrote, "was not acknowledged by the British Government," Bell said:

"The facts are very different.

"There was a disputed succession in 1835; there were four claimants. *The fact of the adoption was denied* by the adverse parties. ...

"It is to be observed, therefore, that in 1835 the adoption or nomination was doubtful; in 1853 the adoption was not doubtful, ... There is no parallel here; no precedent can be founded on the decision of 1835.

* *The Empire in India*, pp. 202-203.

† *Ibid.*, p. 205.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

"The fact is, that the settlement of 1835 was not a decision of our Government at all, but that of a certain party in the Jhansi Durbar. The only decision at which our Government arrived was the decision of not deciding, interposing or even advising in the dispute. The Political Agent was authorised to recognise Raghonath Rao, the deceased Rajah's uncle, who was in actual possession, but no opinion was given as to his right; and these qualifying expressions were added. 'It being presumed that *he is able to establish his authority*, and that his succession will be acknowledged by disinterested parties at Jhansi'."*

In his *Retrospects and Prospects of Indian Policy* (p. 24), Bell wrote:

"We have seen how eagerly Lord Dalhousie accepted an imaginary chain of precedents offered to him for general use. Sattara and Nagpore were annexed on the strength of those precedents. To aid in the particular destruction of the petty State of Jhansi, he tried to extract a direct precedent from its own annals. There was no such precedent; and he could only create the phantom by a perversion of the facts before him."

But the statesmen of England who were entrusted with the Government of India lacked all sense of justice and humanity when dealing with the people and princes of India. They annexed Jhansi with a light heart, but they did not reckon the cost they had to pay for this annexation when the Rani of Jhansi in 1858 took the field against the troops led by British officers.

Ibid., pp. 213-214.

CHAPTER XC

OTHER ANNEXATIONS BY LAPSE

In 1849, Sambalpur in the Central Provinces (now transferred to Bihar and Orissa), and Jaitpur in Bundelkhund were annexed by Dalhousie on the doctrine of "lapse." Applying the same principle, Dalhousie absorbed Tanjore in 1855.*

Major Evans Bell wrote :

"Wallajah, who found the British in possession only of Madras and Cuddalore, made successive grants, by *sunnud*, of Poonamallee and other talooks, to round off the Company's domain ; and in 1763 he made over to his allies the district formerly called the Jaghire, now the Zillah of Chingleput, with a revenue of eighteen lacks of rupees. The English Company, though rapidly acquiring a superiority of material power, were still technically and formally feudatories of the Nawab, and held all their territory, except the town of Madras, as jaghires under *sunnud* from him as sovereign of the country : and these technical and formal relations between the two parties were not only left intact by the treaty of 1801, but have never been disputed or questioned either before or since the death of the late Nawab in 1855.......".†

On the death of the last Nawab Muhammad Ghaus of Carnatic in October, 1855, Azim Jah was not granted that title. At that time Lord Harris was Governor of Madras. In one of his minutes, he wrote that

"the semblance of royalty, without any of the power, is a mockery of authority which must be

* Major Evans Bell writes:

"The highest legal authority in England, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, emphatically denounced the Tanjore spoliation. . . . "

Then in a footnote to the above, he adds :

"Kamachi Bai, the senior widow of the Rajah of Tanjore, filed a bill in the Supreme Court of Madras, to recover possession of her deceased husband's private property, which had been sequestered by the local Government. The Court decided in her favour. The Government of Madras carried the case in appeal before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The decree of the Supreme Court of Madras was reversed, because the Lords of the Privy Council held that the seizure was 'an act of State,' and therefore not questionable in any municipal court. But Lord Kingsdown, who delivered the judgment, made use of the following emphatic language :

"It is extremely difficult to discover in these papers any ground of legal right on the part of the East India Company, or of the Crown of Great Britain, to the possession of this Raj, or of any part of the property of the Rajah on his death ; and, indeed, the seizure was denounced by the Attorney-General (who, from circumstances explained to us at the hearing, appeared as Counsel for the Respondents, and not in his official character for the Appellants) as a most violent and unjustifiable measure. The Rajah was an independent sovereign of territories undoubtedly minute, and bound by treaties to a powerful neighbour, which left him, practically, little power of free action ; but he did not hold his territory, such as it was, as a fief of the British Crown, or of the East India Company ; nor does there appear to have been any pretence for claiming it, on the death of the Rajah without a son, by any legal title, either as an escheat or as *bona vacantia*."

† *The Empire in India*, p. 97.

Akbar Khan

Lord Canning

Bahadur Shah II, Last of the Moghuls

pernicious—that it is impolitic and unwise to allow a pageant to continue, which, though it has been politically harmless, may at any time become a nucleus for sedition and agitation."

Dalhousie endorsed this minute of Harris and so one ancient royal house of India was wiped out of existence.

It has been said by an English writer that

"one cannot fail to be struck with the frequency of death without heirs among Indian sovereigns from the moment when the policy of annexation is proclaimed by a Governor-General."*

There was not much honesty when States were annexed on the pretext of *Lapse.* It is not in India alone but in Europe also that the aristocracy or well-to-do classes are often devoid of male heirs begotten of their body. This phenomenon has been the subject of discussion amongst biologists and economists. It may be that many members of the aristocracy, leading debauched lives, are not blessed with children. But the Hindu law in such cases provided a remedy by what is called *"Adoption."* Not to recognize adoption suggested foul pay. An English writer says :

"The doctrine of lapse was not quite new. John Bull has never been averse to taking possession of a nice estate which cost him nothing. From 1836 to 1840, Loodiana, Ferozepore, Jaloun, and a few others had lapsed. But with Dalhousie in power, the number grew. And Providence seemed strangely kind to the advocates of lapse. The number of deaths amongst the princes, which deaths brought annexations, was remarkable. The assassin's dagger or the poison cup, at a certain time and amongst a certain type of prince, could hardly have been more fatal than was 'death from natural causes.' 'Minor absorptions can hardly be reckoned.'—P. 69 of Mr. Clarke's *British India and England's Responsibilities*, London, 1902."

We have shown in a previous chapter how the British invaders of Afghanistan were bribing the Afghans to 'bring in the heads of one or two of the *Mufsids'* by the offer of '10,000 rupees for each head, or even 15,000 rupees.'†

Is it unthinkable that resort might have been made to the same procedure towards the Indian princes without heirs which was so successful in Afghanistan? Is not the frequency of deaths without heirs among Indian sovereigns, when Dalhousie announced his policy of annexation by "lapse," suggestive of foul play ?

* Ludlow's *British India,* Vol. II, p. 190.

† Kaye's *History of the War in Afghanistan,* 4th Edition, Vol. II, p. 218.

CHAPTER XCI

CONFISCATION OF BERAR

Dalhousie had dealt blows to the Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists. He also intended to wipe out the existence of the Muhammadan powers of India. When he came out to India, there were two large dominions under Muhammadan suzereins in India. These were, in the north, the Kingdom of Oude, and, in the south, the Nizam's dominions. The revenues of each of these principalities amounted to several millions of pounds sterling, for they were very fertile tracts of land and one of them at least was known to contain mines. It was difficult for the Governor-General to restrain his greed. So he intended to swallow up both these principalities. Wrote Robert Knight:

"About the year 1851 the policy in the ascendent at Calcutta was that of 'getting rid of intervening Principalities.' Every native state was considered merely 'an exceptional jurisdiction,' . . . . . . The ruling maxim declared that the existence of so many sovereignties and chiefships, interspersed with our own territory, was in many ways inimical to good government, and to the welfare and prosperity of the people; and that, 'on every fair occasion, their number ought to be diminished.' . . . Native States could not be reformed—they were incorrigible and even if they could, the task would not be a politic or profitable one for us to undertake. *The two great Mussalman States, Hyderabad and Oude, were marked down for annexation, and the process of undermining them, as the Blue Books tell us, was only delayed by the wars in the Punjab and Burmah.* When the time for business came, Oude was annexed; Hyderabad was pushed on the road to ruin; and Lord Dalhousie waited for 'the crash' ".*

Dalhousie, with his policy of annexing Native States, eagerly turned his attention to Hyderabad. Because there was something rotten in the administration of this state, he thought therefore he had a right to absorb it. The language which he used in addressing the Nizam was the most insulting one imaginable.

Because the Nizam was weak, he had to tamely submit to it. To force the Nizam to maintain the Contingent and to pay for it in addition to the Subsidiary force which he had to maintain and pay for by the Treaty of 1800, Dalhousie wrote personally to the Nizam a letter on the 6th June, 1851, in which such insulting expressions were used as it was dangerous for the Nizam "to provoke the resentment of the British Government," "whose power can crush you at its will," and telling him that "the independence of his sovereignty" stood in "imminent danger.' The Nizam was advised to disband "those turbulent mercenaries, the Arab soldiery, and also to make an effort for "the early liquidation of the accumulated debt." If he was unable to do so, he must "forthwith make over" to the British Government certain frontier districts.

As said before, the Nizam was weak and so he had to tamely submit to the insults heaped upon him by the Governor-General. In fact it seems that Dalhousie,

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* *The Statesman,* July 1, 1880, p. 162.

realizing the weakness of the Nizam, went on adding insults to injuries on that ruler.

The Nizam was not indebted to the Indian Government. But then the alliance between the two Governments resembled that of the Giant and the Dwarf. The Government of India had been regularly and mercilessly bleeding the Musalman ruler of the Deccan.

But up to the middle of the nineteenth century the affairs of the Nizam were not so well managed as they ought to have been. His territories were the scenes of fights and bloodshed. Referring to Berar, writes a well-known Anglo-Indian author:

"Petty local revolts were common: the Deshmukhs stood up for their hereditary rights; the farmers took what they could by main force; and there was frequent faction-fighting in the towns between Rajputs and Mussalmans. . . . . . .

"This country was harried from time to time by bands of men under leaders who set up in defiance of the government on various pretexts, but always with the real object of plundering. . . . . . .

Throughout these troubles the behaviour of the Hindu Deshmukhs and other paragana officers was most significantly treasonable against the Nizam's Government. They did their best to thwart his commanders and to abet the Pretenders, although the rebel bands plundered and ravished wherever they went."*

The Nizam had already been paying a large sum for the maintenance of the Company's troops under the subsidiary alliance. But these troops were of no use to him to put down the local petty revolts in his dominion. He was being pressed to have a contingent in his employ for the purpose of putting down these local revolts.

"The Nizam was told that he was bound by treaty, which was untrue, to maintain the contingent, and he was told, which was likewise untrue, that the duties performed by the contingent were not such duties as devolved properly on the subsidiary force. Thus the Nizam was given to understand . . . . . . that if he gave up the contingent he would practically lose all military protection whatever, and all the benefits of the Treaty of 1800."†

He was unjustly made to pay for the Contingent, with reference to which the Marquis of Hastings wrote, as published in "Hyderabad Papers", 1824:

"It is perfectly true that these troops are in fact more ours than those of the Sovereign by whom they are maintained. Now would it be consonant to wisdom, or to the trust reposed in us by the Honourable Company, that we should sacrifice such a security to a caumitical point of equity ?"

In the same Minute he also says that it would be "impolitic to let an over-refinement cause our open abrogation of such an inexpensive addition to our strength."

But then to maintain this "most preposterous example of our national nepotism," as the Contingent was called by Mr. Knight, the Muhammadan ruler of the Deccan Hyderabad was made to run into debt to the East India Company, and to obtain satisfaction for that debt, demands were made upon his fertile frontier districts.

It was under such pretexts and pretences that the Nizam was deprived of his richest province. But Berar was a cotton growing country and that was the secret reason of Dalhousie's confiscating it. Although it was solemnly declared that the

* Lyall's *Berar Gazetter* (1870), pp. 131-132.

† *The Statesman,* July 1, 1880, p. 178.

occupation of Berar would be only temporary, it was never restored to him to whom it legally belonged. Half a century later, another Viceroy—a model Christian, because he was the son of a Christian divine and so reared on the teachings of the Bible from his very cradle, accomplished what Dalhousie had left undone. Curzon made the Nizam give up Berar in permanent lease to the Christian Indian Government.

Of course it was the intention of Dalhousie to annex the whole dominion of the Nizam to the British Government and the confiscation of Berar was meant to be the preliminary step—the introduction of the thin end of the wedge, as it were, into the body politic of the Nizam. But fortunately for the latter, in Sir Salar Jung he possessed a minister who was equal to Dalhousie in diplomacy and statecraft. So it was no easy thing for the Scotch Christian Laird to overreach the Muhammadan statesman who was at the helm of the Nizam's affairs. And this happy circumstance explains why Hyderabad did not share the same fate as Oudh.

Nawabs of Oudh

Wajid Ali Shah

Suja-udowlah and his ten sons

CHAPTER XCII

THE ANNEXATION OF OUDH

Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Sindh, in his journal, dated October 8, 1850, wrote :

"When Dalhousie's father was Commander-in-Chief here [in India], he visited the King of Oude at Lucknow, and made a point of introducing her ladyship, which the King did not understand at all, and fancied the Laird wanted to sell her! After a short time His Majesty of Oude said to his attendants, 'that will do; take her away!'"

Commenting on the above, Sir William Napier, the brother and biographer of the conqueror of Sindh, wrote :

"This should certainly have figured among the reasons for annexing Oude. It would have been stronger than anything yet adduced for that spoliation."*

The annexation of Oudh which was the last annexation effected by Dalhousie, was the most unjustifiable one from every point of view—whether moral or political. Almost all right-thinking politicians—not compatriots or friends and admirers of that Scotch Laird—have condemned that annexation in most unmeasured terms—some calling it even 'Dacoity in Excelsis.' Historians have referred to this annexation as the most important contributing cause of the Sepoy Mutiny. It is, therefore, necessary to know the facts and circumstances which preceded the annexation of Oudh.

Oudh was one of those principalities which were erected when the Mughal Empire was *in extremis*—when the regal sceptre was about to pass away from the hands of the descendants of Babar and Akbar. The early rulers of Oudh were called Nawab Vazirs. They were not independent sovereigns, but were considered to be the hereditary ministers of the Mughal Emperors of Delhi. Their position was, in this respect, somewhat analogous to that of the Peshwas in Maratha history. But the rulers of Oudh gradually threw away the mask of dependence on the Delhi Emperors. And when the English succeeded in gaining a footing in the country, they encouraged the rulers of Oudh to become independent of the influence of Delhi. The climax was reached when the Marquess of Hastings made the Oudh ruler "King" and styled him "His Majesty."

Although the Oudh ruler was promoted to the kingship, yet no liberty of action in any shape or form was accorded to him; he was made to depend on the English more and more every day. All semblance of power was being taken away from him.

Having drawn the ruler of Oudh into the net of what the British called friendship, they took delight in clipping his wings and making him helpless.

The rulers of Oudh were sold by the British—nay, they were being bled, whenever the British required their blood to improve their own anaemic condition. Wrote Henry Lawrence in the *Calcutta Review* for January, 1845 :

* The Life and Opinions of General Sir Charles James Napier, G. C. B., by Lieutenant-General Sir W. Napier, K. C. B. 2nd Edition, 1857, Vol. IV p. 296.

"No portion of India has been more discussed in England than Oude. Afghanistan and the Punjab are modern questions, but for half a century, country gentlemen have been possessed of a vague idea of a province of India, nominally independent in its home relations but periodically used as a wet-nurse to relieve the difficulties of the East India Company's finances. The several attacks that were made on Warren Hastings, Lord Wellesley, and the Marquis of Hastings, have all served to keep up the interest of the Oude question. .. ... We are among those unfashionable people who consider that politics and morals can never be safely separated ; that an honest private individual must necessarily be an honest official, and *vice-versa* ; but we confess that we have been staggered by a study of Oude transactions. Most assuredly Warren Hastings, Lord Teignmouth, Lord Wellesley, Lord Hastings, and Lord Auckland would never have acted in private life, as they did in the capacity of Governors towards prostrate Oude. ... ...

"Oude affords but a discreditable chapter in our Indian annals, and furnishes a fearful warning of the lengths to which a statesman may be carried, when once he substitutes expediency and his own view of public advantage, for the simple rule of right and wrong. The facts furnished by every writer on Oude affairs all testify to the same point, that British interference with that province has been as prejudicial to its Court and people as it has been disgraceful to the British name. To quote the words of Colonel Sutherland, an able and temperate writer, 'there is no State in India with whose Government we have interfered so systematically and so uselessly as with that of Oude.' He most justly adds, 'this interference has been more in favour of men than of measures ;' ... In short, wherever we turn, we see written in distinct characters the blighting influences of our interference.

* * * *

"If ever there was a device for insuring malgovernment, it is that of a Native Ruler and Minister, both relying on foreign bayonets, and directed by a British Resident. Even if all three were able, virtuous, and considerate, still the wheels of Government could hardly move smoothly. ... ... Each of the three may work incalculable mischief, but no one of them *can* do good if thwarted by the others."

The above is a true description of the unhappy and unenviable position in which the rulers of Oudh had been placed by the British Government of India. It is not necessary to mention in detail the transactions of the English with Oudh from the time of Warren Hastings. But it is only proper here to mention that that which gave the English what they considered to be their right in meddling with the affairs of Oudh was the Treaty of 1801 whereby the British Government bound itself "to defend the territories which will remain to his excellency the Vazir against all foreign and domestic enemies." All the troubles of Oudh originated from and were due to this interference of the British. Half a century's interference of the British with the affairs of that State did not lead to their improvement in any way. When Lord Dalhousie assumed charge of the office of Governor-General of India, Oudh affairs had come to such a pass that the Governor-General thought that they required his interference. But this interference meant extinction of that kingdom. But before accomplishing the object so dear to his heart, he deputed a diplomatist who was a successful catcher of thugs and thieves to report on its affairs. Sir William Sleeman was the diplomatist chosen for this task. He was sent as political resident to Lucknow.

The English had been long casting their eyes on Oudh with greed. They were coveting it. The author of the article on the "physical capabilities of Oude" in the *Calcutta Review* for June, 1856, wrote :

"No climate can, however, be finer than that of Oude during the cold season,"...

Then referring to the climate of the Teraee forest, the same writer proceeded :

"From October up to the commencement of the rainy season no climate of Europe is more delightful and 'were it not,' we quote our own words published a year ago in a Calcutta journal, 'for the arbitrary government of the king, which is a serious obstacle to every enterprise, a bold and venturesome planter would within a very short period be able to make a fortune'...

"This subject, one so important for proving the capabilities of Oude, we some time ago discussed in a daily journal nearly in the following words:

"The enterprising merchant, if his movements were not hampered by the vexatious obstacles, which the feudal lords of the country, as well as the native officers of the king, invariably throw in the way of all commercial undertakings, would not fail to make a large fortune, if he collected and despatched the many articles of commerce which are now allowed to be wasted unprofitably.'"*

Regarding the fertility of Oudh a British writer theorized as follows :

"The fertility of many portions of the land has often, strange as it may appear, been enhanced by the oppression of the Governors of districts, and the mutinous dispositions of the land-holders. These being at war with their sovereign have escaped into the jungles; and their lands being allowed to lie uncultivated, they are enabled to recover themselves from over-cropping. They are perhaps converted into meadows for pasturage, and while they are such, are manured by the dung of the cattle and deer; and by being swamped in the rainy season, are impregnated with the above-mentioned [saltish] deposits."†

Without annexation, the exploitation of Oudh by the English was not possible. Hence the absorption of this kingdom was deemed of primary importance by the British sojourners who were commanded by the God whom they worshipped, "Thou shalt not steal."

But the natives of Oudh were against their province being annexed to the territory of the East India Company. At a private meeting of 200 chiefs which took place on the 18th August, 1855,

"It was determined to spend £150,000 a year to prevent annexation, by bribery and agitation. Kasim, an old chief of ninety-five, was elected president and spoke two hours till he fainted. He had been born, he said, under the Oude crescent; the greatness of the royal house was fallen, but their people still respected them. It was of no avail, he said, to resist the Company. If the firman of annexation should overtake them, they must bow to it; but fight meanwhile with the endurance of the ox and the fox's cunning. The Nazarenes love gold; the men of Oude loved their wild freedom more. Let them give gold to the Christians from the royal and private treasuries—to hungry chiefs, to greedy agitators. Were not these men the same as their predecessors? The chiefs sided with him. But bolder counsels were urged in other quarters. Pamphlets appealing to Musalman fanaticism were largely circulated. Of one of these, "The Sword the Key of Heaven and Hell," 300 copies were seized by the Indian Government of Cawnpore."§

The Anglo-Indians were crying aloud for the annexation of Oudh. Some of those Britishers who had been in the pay of the King of Oudh and had eaten his salt, forgetting all sense of gratitude and honour, if ever they possessed any, wrote books inventing alleged acts of oppression and cruelty of the King. One of such books saw the light of day in London in 1855. It is named, "The Private Life of an Eastern

* *The Calcutta Review*, Vol. XXVI (1856), pp. 422-23.

† *The Calcutta Review*, Vol. XXVI (1856), pp. 415-416.

§ Ludlow's *British India*, Vol. II, pp. 208-209.

King. By a Member of the Household of his late Majesty, Nassir-u-Deen, King of Oude."

The writer was the portrait-painter to the last King of Oudh, and so he had an opportunity of observing the interior of Court life in Oudh. Because this European was trusted by his Musalman royal master, therefore he took delight in betraying his trust and abused the King. It was in reviewing this work that the *Calcutta Review* of July, 1855, which was at that time, we believe, edited by the celebrated Scotch Christian Missionary, Dr. Duff, published an article, entitled "The Age of Conquest: is it Past?" The writer of the article advocated the conquest and annexation of Oudh, He wrote:

"The age of conquests has *not* passed, nor is it passing; it proceeds, with greater or less rapidity, in every corner of the earth. ..England, while repudiating conquest, goes on conquering, annexes a new territory in every half decade, and annihilates some barbarian tribe in every two years. It is true, the last named power believes herself free of any such design. She does not, however, draw back her hand; and the only consequence of her prudery is, that her conquests are without system, made often at the wrong moment, and generally three times as costly as they need have been. She destroys the dynasty of Runjeet, and leaves the seeds of rebellion, because she will not 'conquer.' She annexes Pegu, and makes a virtue of abstaining from the 'conquest' of the remainder of the kingdom. In short, despite Manchester men and able editors, cotton manufacturers and philanthropic dreamers, she is as much pledged to advance as the Romanoffs or the States."

Then the European writer dilated on the virtues of conquering states and compared them with those which are "non-conquering." He wrote:

"The Oriental Empires have ceased to conquer, and are ceasing to exist. Everywhere around is the sound of the crumbling of rotten thrones."

Then he philosophised:

"If then, throughout the world, progress and conquest are in fact united, is it not just possible that they may also be united of right? Is there not some faint probability, that conquest may be right as well as inevitable, and that the Manchester school are committing not only a blunder but a crime in resisting it."

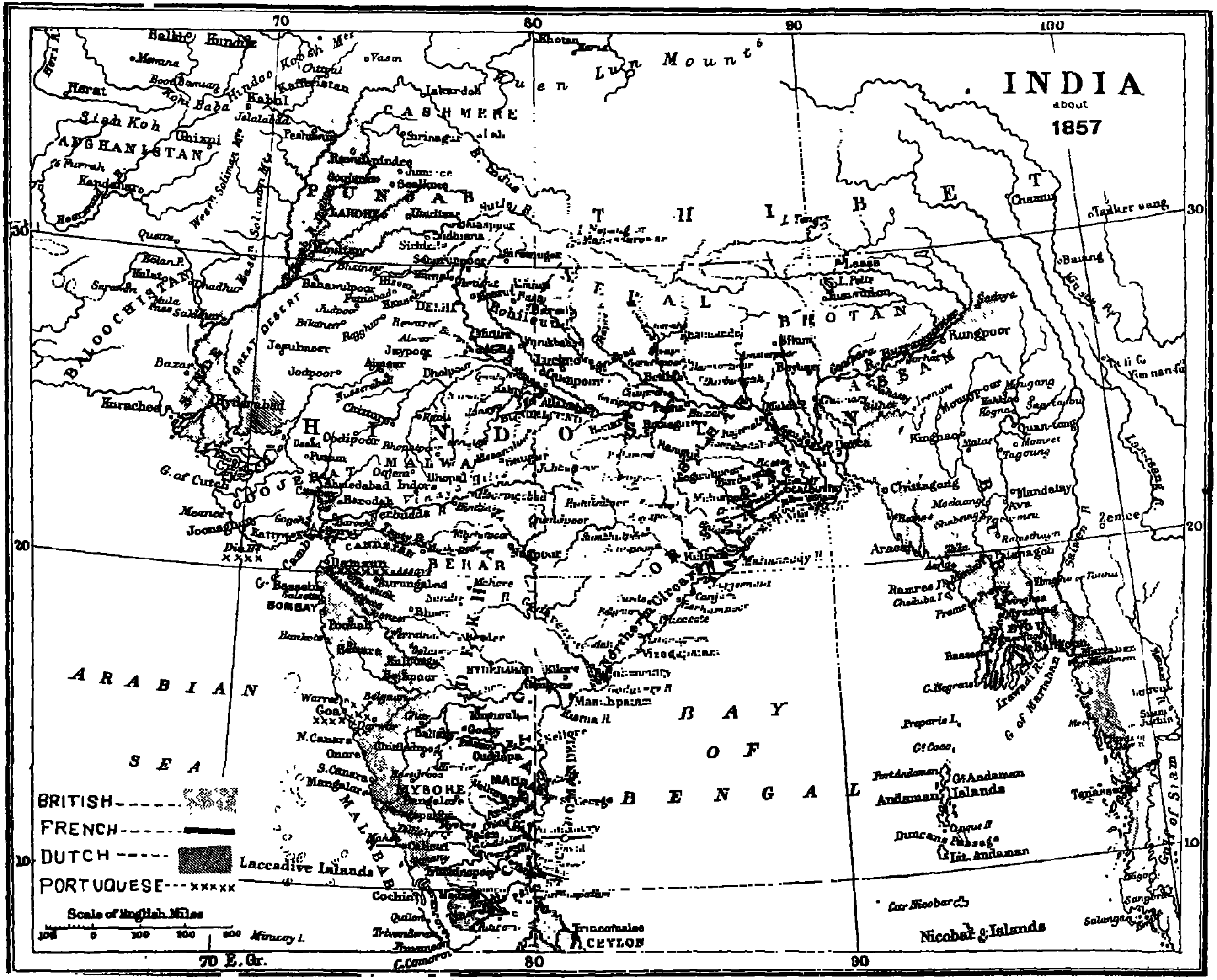
Then, referring to Oudh, he wrote:

"This kingdom of Oude is perhaps the best illustration of English blundering on the subject of conquest."

After having alluded to the existence of oppressions in Oudh, the writer proceeded:

"Here we have a vast scene of oppression . . . . This alone, upon our principles, would justify conquest, having for its sole excuse the termination of such oppression. But there is more than this. The oppression exists solely because we arm and defend the oppression . . . We *can* stop the oppression. Two lines in the *Gazette* would banish the whole crew, King, eunuchs, women and chuckladars, into their natural insignificance. There is no army in Oude. The Hindu population is wholly on our side. The relatives of our sepoys, of both creeds, are most anxious for the annexation, and the remaining Mussalmans are not sufficiently united or sufficiently aggrieved for hostile action. Two regiments of Europeans would be sufficient, and two regiments of Europeans we can spare.

"But one argument remains.—It is alleged by some whose Hinduism leads them to sympathize deeply with the Native Princes that to annex Oude would be to violate engagements. We may



INDIA
about
1857
BRITISH
FRENCH
DUTCH
PORTUGUESE
Scale of English Miles
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BENGAL
THIBET
HINDOSTAN
PUNJAB
CASHMERE
AFGHANISTAN
BELOOCHISTAN
NEPAL
BHOTAN
ASSAM
BURMA
MALWA
BERAR
MYSORE
MALABAR
CEYLON
Laccadive Islands
Andaman Islands
Nicobar Islands
BOMBAY
DELHI
Calcutta
Madras

deprive the King of the power to do evil, but we may not strip him of his revenues. They are to be paid in order that he may live in luxury. In needs little argument to shew that these revenues belong to the country, and not to any individual house. His hereditary right is one of government, not property."

The European writer concluded his article by saying that

"If conquest is occasionally right in itself, if it is specially right, when, by refraining from it, we are supporting crime, if we are so supporting crime in Oude, and if the claims of the only person who professed to have rights are nil, then Oude, we conceive, should be annexed. There is no cause for delay. Even as we write, there is a faint sound of a religious war, which, at all hazards, and at any cost, must be prevented. The only method of preventing it is by annexation."

After the annexation of Oudh, Dalhousie left India. It was the last principality in India that was annexed to the dominion of the East India Company.

The rise of the British supremacy may be said to have reached its last stage with the administration of Dalhousie. Sir Edwin Arnold, in his history of the Marquis of Dalhousie's administration of British India, writes :

"The administration of British India, under the Marquis of Dalhousie, consummated a policy, and closed a period. . . . Beneath his rule the territory of 'the British merchants trading in the East' received its latest extension ; and at his departure, the sun of their power verged to a stormy setting."

But for the Second Afghan War, which took place some twenty-three years, and the third Burmese War some thirty years after Dalhousie's departure, the boundaries and contents of the Indian Empire would not have exceeded the limits assigned to them by him. His acquisitions by fraud and force and "bad faith" were meant to be the last of empire-building in India.

CHAPTER XCIII

REFLECTIONS ON THE COMPANY'S CHARTER OF 1853

On every occasion of the renewal of the charter of the Company, the authorities paraded their philanthropic motives to make the world believe that India was to be governed not for the benefit of the natives of England but for that of the people of India. Thus in 1813, it was considered to be the *duty* of England "to promote the interest and happiness of the inhabitants of the British dominions" in India, and so a sum of not less than one lac of rupees in each year was ordered to be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and encouragement of the learned natives of India. In 1833, it was enacted,

"That no native of the said territories, nor any natural born subject of his Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, color or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company."

But between 1833 and 1853, the British dominions in India had swelled to such a large extent by means of fraud and force, which had been twice declared by the British Parliament to be "repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of" England, that it was not considered any longer necessary to keep up the mask of philanthropy. It is, therefore, that the Charter Act of 1853 does not contain any section which may be construed in any way as conferring any privileges on the natives of India. It was tacitly understood that India was not to be governed for the benefit of its inhabitants. India was to be regularly exploited and its natives to be Anglicised. These are the impressions which are forced on one's mind by reading the voluminous evidence recorded by the Select Committees of both Houses of the British Parliament in the inquiry preceding the renewal of the Charter. Much stress was laid on public works—which meant Railway construction—education and spread of Christianity. Of course, the Railways would benefit England and its shop-keepers. Education was not to be based on national lines, but it was to be imparted from political motives to make the natives loyal. Evangelization of the Indians was meant to achieve the same end.*

One of the alleged causes of the Mutiny is said to have been the alarm felt by the natives of India at their religions and religious institutions being in danger of subversion. The manner in which Christian ministers of faith were encouraged to give evidence before the Parliamentary committees and the insulting tone in which they were accustomed to speak of the religious institutions, ceremonies and prophets of the natives would lend color to the belief of the natives that the Government of

* See my *History of Education in India under the Rule of the East India Company,* pp. 105—106.

the country wished to subvert their religions. In his evidence on 22nd March, 1832, Captain T. Macan told the Commons' Committee that

"We have never interfered directly with their religion, though they begin to complain, that if we do not directly interfere, we at least wink at, if not encourage, interference."

Then he was asked :

"To what circumstances do you particularly refer ?—I refer to the sentiments of many talented natives, Mahomedans, who have spoken to me of the countenance shown by Government to Missionaries and to the excesses to which missionaries have gone in censuring their religious habits, even in the streets. One of those missionaries mentioned to the mixed population he was addressing, 'that they hoped for pardon' through the intercession of Mahomet, but that he was in Hell at present, and that they all would follow him if they persisted in their belief of his doctrines."

Every countenance was given to the Missionaries and Christianity, and nothing was done for Muhammadanism or Hinduism or for the institutions of either faith.

Under these circumstances it is small wonder that the Charter Act of 1853 and the conduct of the Parliamentary Committees in reporting evidence of the witnesses examined by them, were in no small measure responsible for the terrible catastrophe which destroyed the existence of the Company of Merchants to whom was entrusted the government of India.*

See my *Consolidation of the Christian Power in India*, Chapter on Christianization of India.

CHAPTER XCIV

THE INDIAN MUTINY OF 1857

Canning, who succeeded Dalhousie as the Governor-General of India, was destined to be the last nominee of the East India Company to that high appointment. Notwithstanding the self-laudation of that Scotch "Laird of Cockpen," it was obvious that the high-handed manner in which that Marquis had conducted the affairs of India did not bode good to that country. It did not require the vision of a prophet to see the cloud on the political horizon of India, not bigger than a man's hand, threatening the fate of that land. Lord Canning saw it and said so in England when he was appointed as Governor-General of India. And not long after he had assumed that office in March, 1856, his prediction came to be fulfilled by the outbreak known as the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

Just as fifty years before, the Mutiny at Vellore was due to the English riding roughshod over the religious and caste prejudices, usages and customs of the non-Christians, so after half a century, when they had brought more territory of India under the rule of their countrymen, they considered it no longer necessary to pay any attention to the feelings and sentiments of the Hindus and Muhammadans. Christianity and Christian missionaries were being openly patronised by the Company's Government. The Indian people naturally felt alarmed that the Christian Government meant to destroy their religious and social institutions. Mr. Nolan* writes:

"The Government ..became less careful of offending the religious prejudices of the soldiers. Instances had occurred of these prejudices having been invaded in various ways without creating revolts, but the Government did not know that in every such case bad feeling was created, which was quietly but actively diffused."

It was in this spirit of neglecting to consult the religious prejudices of Hindu and Muhammadan Sepoys that greased cartridges were served out to them. On the 22nd of January, 1857, Captain Wright of the 10th Native Infantry at Dum-Dum reported that

"a very unpleasant feeling existed among the native soldiers who were at the depot for instruction, regarding the grease used in preparing the cartridges, some evil disposed person having spread a report that it consisted of a mixture of the fat of pigs and cows.

There is no denying the fact that the report spread was founded on truth, as no precaution had been taken to ensure the absence of any objectionable fat.

The "greased cartridge" served the purpose of a blazing torch applied to the inflammable material that had been collected together by Dalhousie and his predecessors.

In its issue of 9th August, 1896, under the heading "The Bengalee Press, how to deal with it," wrote the *Pioneer*, a well-known Anglo-Indian daily:

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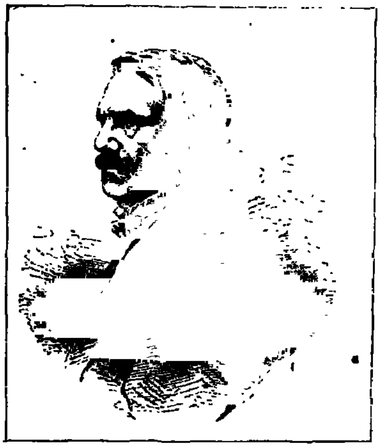
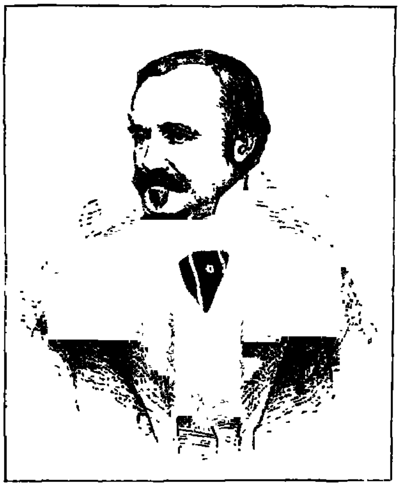
* *History of the British Empire*, Vol. II, p. 706



Sir John Lawrence, G. C. B.



General Sir James Outram, G. C. B.

Lord Dalhousie

Alex. Duff

"We know how Englishmen within the memory of living men treated their own newspaper writers...If a gentle and graceful writer forgot himself so far as to call the Prince Regent 'an Adonis of forty,' he got two years' 'hard.' If a clergyman praised the French revolution and advocated Parliamentary reform and fair representation, he was condemned to work in iron manacles, to wade in sludge among the vilest criminals."

The writer advocated the infliction of the same punishment on an Indian who dared to write on the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

It has been very unsafe for an Indian to write on that subject with that freedom and impartiality which its importance demands and deserves. We shall, therefore, content ourselves by quoting the views of Britishers as to the causes of that event in the history of Christian rule in India.

The name of Mr. Drummond is not so well known in India as it deserves to be. He was a member of Parliament during the years which witnessed the Indian Mutiny, and the transfer of India from the hands of merchants to the Crown. As a Parliamentarian, he had not such a brilliant career as John Bright. But, nevertheless, his sympathy for the natives of India was as genuine as that of the great Quaker statesman. Therefore, no apology is needed for the following quotation from his speech delivered in 1858 :

"Mr. Rees states, in his *Narrative*, that the conduct of many of our young officers towards the natives is cruel and tyrannical ; while the *London Quarterly* declares that the behavior of Europeans is marked by a high degree of pride and insolence. Lord William Bentinck said, that the result of his observation was, that the European generally knew little or nothing of the customs and manners of the people and Mr. Fraser Tytler asserts, that the servants of the Company are the least able to supply correct information upon these subjects. Now, if we are proud of our aristocracy and mindful of their dignity, how can we think that these things do not rankle in the breasts of men who can trace up their hereditary rank and their possessions to a period anterior to the time of Alexander the Great ? Are we so foolish as to imagine that, because they do not retort and insult upon the moment, they do not feel it ? We may depend upon it, that the Italian proverb is true, in India as everywhere else—'Vengeance sleeps long, but never dies.'

"The people of India having been subjected to such treatment, is it surprising that they should hate us ? Mr. Fraser, a gentleman quoted by Mr. Norton, states, that the people generally are dissatisfied, and that they have too much cause to be so. He adds, that there is disaffection enough for half a dozen rebellions. . . . . .

"Now the root of the whole evil is the doctrine that India is a country to be *exploited* for the benefit of the Civil Service. If we are going to look upon India as we have looked upon it hitherto as a mere place of plunder for English officials, we shall surely lose it, and shall deserve to lose it."*

"*Vengeance sleeps long, but never dies.*" We are accustomed to hear Englishmen say that England has made India, that India never existed as India until the natives of England went there, and that the Muhammadans were cutting the throats of the Hindus. If such are the facts, then the natives of India should have been grateful to the natives of England and there was no occasion for the Mutiny to occur. But let a few British writers speak of the early British administration of India. It is not necessary to quote Burke and Sheridan, who exposed the maladministration of Warren Hastings, for their

* Mr. Drummond's Speech on the Government of India, June, 7, 1858.

speeches are well known to all readers of English literature. Besides, they lived in the 18th century. Let us see what British authors of the 19th century have said of the British administration of India before the Mutiny period.

Herbert Spencer is not a sentimentalist. He is a philosopher and a deep thinker. His writings will last as long as the English language itself. Listen to his remarks then on the British administration of India :

"The Anglo-Indians of the last century whom Burke described as 'Birds of prey and passage in India' showed themselves only a shade less cruel than their prototypes of Peru and Mexico. Imagine how black must have been their deeds, when even the Directors of the Company admitted 'that the vast fortunes acquired in the inland trade have been obtained by a scene of the most tyrannical and oppressive conduct that was ever known in any age or country. Conceive the atrocious state of society described by Vansittart, who tells us that the English compelled the natives to buy or sell at just what rates they pleased on pain of flogging or confinement. Judge to what a pass things must have come when, in describing a journey, Warren Hastings says: 'Most of the petty towns and *Serais* were deserted at our approach.' A cold-blooded treachery was the established policy of the authorities. Princes were betrayed into war with each other; and one of them having been helped to overcome his antagonist, was then himself dethroned for some alleged misdemeanour. Always some muddied stream was at hand as a pretext for official wolves. Dependent Chiefs possessing coveted lands were impoverished by exorbitant demands for tribute and their ultimate inability to meet these demands was construed into a treasonable offence punished by deposition. Even down to our own day kindred iniquities are continued. Down to our own day, too, are continued the grievous salt monopoly, and the pitiless taxation, that wring from the poor ryots nearly half the produce of the soil. Down to our own day continues the cunning despotism which uses native soldiers to maintain and extend native subjection, a despotism under which, not many years since, a regiment of sepoys was deliberately massacred, for refusing to march without proper clothing. Down to our own day, the police authorities league with wealthy scamps, and allow the machinery of the law to be used for the purposes of extortion. Down to our own day so-called gentlemen will ride their elephants through the crops of impoverished peasants and will supply themselves with provisions from the native villages without paying for them. And down to our own day, it is common with the people in the interior to run into the woods at sight of a European."*

Every educated native of India should try to read Sir John Kaye's History of the Sepoy War, for that gifted historian has given an unprejudiced account of the British administration of India preceding the Mutiny. In describing the work of Dalhousie in India, Kaye writes :

"He (Lord Dalhousie) never doubted that it was good alike for England and for India that the map of the country which he had been sent to govern should present one surface of Red. . . .
He commenced his career at a time when the ablest of our public functionaries in India had forsaken the traditions of the old school—the school of Malcolm, of Elphinstone, and of Metcalfe—and stood eager and open-armed to embrace and press closely to them the very doctrine of which they perceived in Dalhousie so vigorous an exponent . . . . . As his workmen were admirably suited to his work, so also was the field, to which he was called, the one best adapted to the exercise of his peculiar powers. In no other part of our Empire could his rare administrative capacity have found such scope for development. For he was of an imperious and despotic nature, not submitting to control, and resenting opposition ; and in no situation could he have exercised a larger measure of power in the face of so few constitutional checks. His capacities required free

* *Social Statics*

exercise, and it may be doubted whether they would have been fully developed by anything short of this absolute supremacy. · And he was successful beyond all example, so far as success is the full accomplishment of one's own desires and intentions. But one fatal defect in his character tainted the stream of his policy at the source, and converted into brilliant errors some of the most renowned of his achievements. No man who is not endowed with a comprehensive imagination can govern India with success. Dalhousie had no imagination. Lacking the imaginative faculty, men, after long years of experience, may come to understand the national character; and a man of lively imagination, without such experience, may readily apprehend it after the intercourse of a few weeks. But in neither way did Dalhousie ever come to understand the genius of the people among whom his lot was cast. He had but one idea of them—an idea of a people habituated to the despotism of a dominant race. He could not understand the tenacity of affection with which they clung to their old traditions. He could not sympathise with the veneration which they felt for their ancient dynasties. He could not appreciate their fidelity to the time honoured institutions and the immemorial usages of the land. . . .He could not see with other men's eyes; or think with others men's brains; or feel with other men's hearts. With the characteristic unimaginativeness of his race he could not for a moment divest himself of his individuality, or conceive the growth of ancestral pride and national honour in other breasts than those of the Campbells and the Ramsays.

"And this egotism was cherished and sustained by the prevailing sentiments of the new school of Indian politicians, who as I have said, laughed to scorn the doctrines of the men who had built up the great structure of our Indian Empire, and by the utterances of a Press, which, with rare ability expounded the views of this school, and insisted upon the duty of universal usurpation. Such indeed, was the prevailing tone of the majority, in all ranks from the highest to the lowest, that any one who meekly ventured to ask. 'How would you like it yourself?' was reproached in language little short of that which might be fitly applied to a renegade or a traitor. To suggest that in an Asiatic race there might be a spirit of independence and a love of country, the manifestations of which were honorable in themselves, however inconvenient to us, was commonly to evoke as the very mildest result the imputation of being 'Anti-British,' whilst sometimes the 'true British feeling' asserted itself in a less refined choice of epithets, and those who ventured to sympathise in any way with the people of the East were at once denounced as 'white niggers.' Yet among these very men, so intolerant of anything approaching the assertion of liberty by an Asiatic people, there were some who could well appreciate and sympathise with the aspirations of European bondsmen, and could regard with admiration the struggles of the Italian, the Switzar, or the Pole to liberate himself by a sanguinary contest, from the yoke of the usurper, But the sight of the dark skin sealed up their sympathies. They contended not merely that the love of country, that the spirit of liberty, as cherished by European races, is in India wholly unknown, but that Asiatic nations, and especially the nations of India, have no right to judge what is best for themselves; no right to revolt against the beneficence of a more civilised race of white men. who would think and act for them, and deprive them for their own good, of all their most cherished rights and their most valued possessions."

Says another English writer :

"One of the most graphic of our writers on India, Dr. Russell, has remarked on the indifference manifested in England on the abuse of power, thousands of miles away : how in spite of the marvellous eloquence of Burke and his colleagues, the accusations against Warren Hastings, though of the gravest kind, were received with indifference by the people, because the acts referred to were perpetrated in such a far country; whereas, had they been done in the Channel Island, in Ireland, or in Scotland, the intelligence would have been received with a general burst of indignation. 'To-night I hear,' says the same writer,—it is in 1858—'that the menagerie of the King of Oude, as much his private property as his watch or turban, were sold under discreditable circumstances and his jewels seized and impounded, though we had no more claim on them than

on the Crown diamonds of Russia. Do the English people care for these things ? Do they know them ? The hundred millions of Hindustan know them well, and care for them too. ..

"With all its glories, conquests, triumphs, spoils, the Government of the East India Company in India was tainted from the very first with mighty vices, and these became more flagrant as time gave to the various abuses the impunity or even the authority derived from prescription. For generation after generation, the great aim and object of the servants of the Company, from the high civil and military functionaries downwards was to squeeze as large as possible a fortune out of the country as quickly as might be, and turn their backs upon it for ever, so soon as that object had been attained, and the last golden harvest had been shaken down from the pagoda tree. In perfect truth has it been said that if the native rulers chastised the people with whips, the European master chastised them with scorpions, and that the subjugated race found the little finger of the Company thicker than the loins of the worst and most dissolute of their native princes. ... None but the wilfully blind could assert or even affect to believe that the English rule in India was popular among the inhabitants."

Who were the Mutineers ? They were principally (*a*) the Marathas, who had been perhaps the greatest sufferers, for the Peshwa had been deposed and his adopted son—Nana Saheb—did not receive any justice at the hands of the East India Company; the Maratha states of Satara, Nagpur and Jhansi were annexed; (*b*) the Musalmans of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh who witnessed the overthrow of the Royal houses of Delhi and Lucknow; and (*c*) also the *Purbias* or Hindus of Oudh. It was these three classes which used to furnish sepoys to the East India Company. The sepoys revolted because they saw the destruction of the landed aristocracy of the country, and the ill-treatment their fellow-countrymen received at the hands of the new masters of the land. The causes of the Mutiny may be described to be the *"Bad Faith"* of the British rulers of India towards Indian princes on the one hand, and the ill-treatment of the natives of India by the British ruling class on the other.

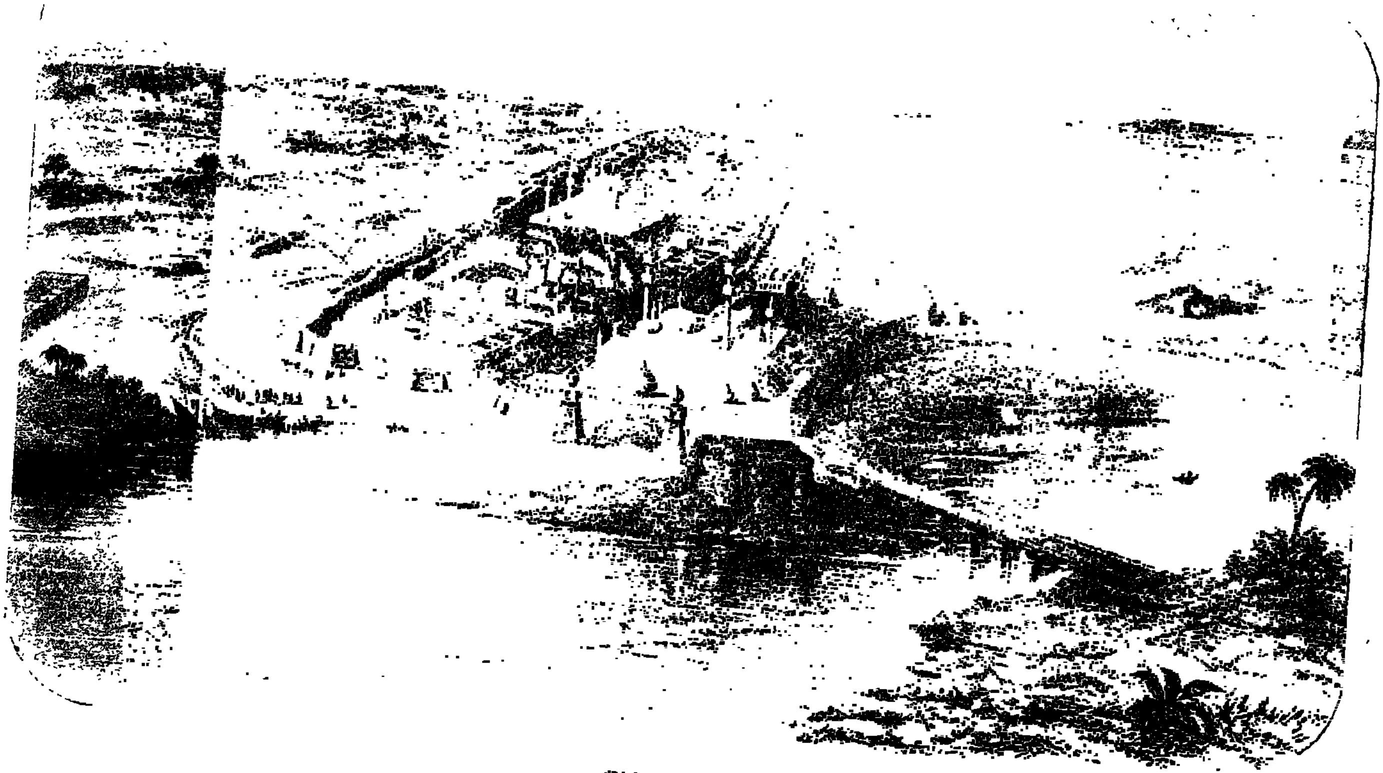
It is not necessary to write in detail about the spread of the revolt in the different provinces and towns of India and the manner in which it was put down by the British. There are several admirable works on the subject, the most comprehensive being that of Kaye and Malleson, which may be consulted profitably by those who are interested in it.

The Indian Mutiny could not have been suppressed but for the help given to the British by the Sikhs and the Gurkhas.

Sir John Lawrence was the administrator of the Panjab when the outbreak took place in Delhi, Lucknow and other places in India.

It was thought that the Sikhs who had hardly a decade before been made to lose their independence by the English would have gladly embraced the opportunity afforded by the revolt in Hindustan to join the Mutineers to regain their lost independence from the hands of men of alien race and creed. But such not having been the case was to be attributed to their demoralization under the foreign yoke. How the Sikh Chiefs were treated by their English conquerors is thus described by the Scotch "Laird of Cockpen" in writing to the Directors of the East India Company on August 25, 1849 :—

"Stripped of all rank, deprived of all property, reduced, each of them, to a monthly pittance of



Old Delhi

two hundred rupees, confined within narrow limits, and then watched, well knowing that an attempt at flight would be made at the risk of their lives."*

The two brothers, Sir Henry and Mr. John (afterwards Lord) Lawrence, as members of the Panjab Board, could not pull on together. The former wanted to be fair and just to the Panjab Chiefs and tried to lessen the weight of the chain by which they were held in subjection, whereas the latter wanted to practise refined brutalities on the newly subjugated non-Christian people of the Panjab. No wonder that he found favour with the Governor-General of India, who abolished the Panjab Board, removed Sir Henry Lawrence from the land of the Five Rivers, and made John Lawrence the sole autocrat of that province by appointing him its Chief Commissioner. How heartless and cruel John Lawrence was is to be gathered from his brother Sir Henry's farewell letter to him, dated Lahore, January 20, 1853. He wrote :

"As this is my last day at Lahore, I venture to offer you a few words of advice, which I hope you will take in the spirit it is given in, and that you will believe that, if you preserve the peace of the country and make the people high and low happy, I shall have no regrets that I vacated the field for you. It seems to me that you look on almost all questions affecting Jageerdars and Mafeedars in a perfectly different light from all others; in fact, that you consider them as nuisances and as enemies. If any thing like this be your feeling, how can you expect to do them justice, as between man and man?... I think we are doubly bound to treat them kindly, *because they are down,* and because they and their hangers-on have still some influence as affecting the public peace and contentment. I would simply do to them as I would be done by."†

It does not appear that Sir Henry's advice had much influence on his brother John in his treatment of the people of the Panjab.

When the Mutiny broke out, the people of the Panjab were kept loyal by being *plundered* of their wealth.

"The forced loan at the rate of 6 per cent. interest, which early in the Mutiny had been levied by order of Sir John Lawrence on different districts of the Punjab, had been raised with some difficulty; for the visits of the tax-gatherer are never pleasant, and the money-loving Sikh was not likely to give his money readily in support of a doubtful cause; but raised it had been. And it proved a masterstroke of policy, for it supplied us with funds when we needed them most sorely, and bound the landowners and merchants to the cause of our Government by ties the force of which they could not fail to recognize."§

The murder in cold blood and with inhuman atrocities of some of the Sikh Gurus at Delhi by order of the degenerate later Mughal sovereigns made the Sikhs take the vow of revenge on that capital of the Mughals. The loot of Delhi was a day-dream with the followers of Guru Govind and Banda. Sir John Lawrence took advantage of their day-dream and despatched them in numbers to that unhappy capital to realize it.

"The Sikhs, among whose traditional day-dreams the sack of Delhi had ever been prominent, now found themselves within reach of the realisation of their fondest wishes. No scruples restrained them...Their natural astuteness,...had taught them how to discern the lurking places of concealed

* Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence,* Vol. I, p. 287.

† *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence,* by Sir Herbert Edwardes and Herman Merivale, Vol. II, p. 195.

§ Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence,* Vol. II, p. 308.

treasure. It might be buried beneath the floors of their houses or bricked up in their walls. In the former case it might be ascertained by pouring water through the crevices, for if the space below were excavated it would soon filter down; if not would return to the level of the floor. In the latter, the wall might be sounded as a physician sounds the chests of a patient; and the results of this process of auscultation were very convincing to our Sikh comrades,... It was clearly ascertained that large quantities of plunder were handed over walls to their brethren below, and that afterwards numbers of laden carts passed out at the opposite gates of the city. .."

It was thus that, with the aid of the Sikhs, the mutiny was suppressed, which made Sir John Lawrence write to Sir Frederick Currie, in 1858:

"Under the mercy of God the loyalty and contentment of the people of the Punjab has saved India. Had the Punjab gone, we must have been ruined."†

During the Nepal War, Oudh was made the base of operations and its sovereign advanced money to Lord Hastings to prosecute the war against the Gurkhas. This was rankling in the breast of those mountaineers, and so on the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny, the sturdy Highlanders crossed their frontiers to carry fire and sword through Oudh. Sir Jang Bahadur boasted of having 'massacred five or six thousand' subjects of Oudh on his 'way to Lucknow.' The Gurkhas became rich by the plunder of Lucknow. The son of Wajid Ali Shah appealed, without success, to the ruler of Nepal to make common cause with the Mutineers against the English.

It is necessary to consider how far the atrocities and barbarities attributed to the Mutineers are true, and if true whether such atrocities are unprecedented in the annals of mankind. The natives of Hindustan have been painted in the blackest colour possible by the Christian people of the West. British historians of the Indian Mutiny have abused in no measured terms the natives of India for their alleged atrocities on English men, women and children at Delhi, Cawnpur and Jhansi. An allegation like this is easier to make than to disprove. It is the memory of these alleged barbarities on their women and children which still rankles in the breasts of the natives of England, and which makes anything approaching friendship or good feeling between natives of England and India impossible. There can be no doubt that there is a great deal of falsehood and exaggeration in the British narrative of Indian atrocities and barbarities. Lying is a virtue not solely monopolized by 'vile Asiatics,' but is equally laid claim to by Europeans.

Regarding these alleged atrocities, Mr. Justin McCarthy writes :

"The elementary passions of manhood were inflamed by the stories, *happily not true,* of the wholesale dishonour and barbarous mutilation of women. ... As a matter of fact, no indignities, other than that of the compulsory corn-grinding, were put upon the English ladies. ... There were no outrages, in the common acceptation of the term, upon women. No English women were stripped or dishonoured, or purposely mutilated."§

Granting even that the Mutineers were guilty of the alleged atrocities, which must

* Kaye's *History of the Sepoy War,* Vol. III, p. 640.

† Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence,* Vol. II, p. 335.

§ *History of our own Times,* Vol. III.

certainly then be unreservedly condemned, we should consider whether such atrocities are unprecedented in the annals of mankind. An English writer says:

"It is only with a painful moral effort that one can dwell with cool and deliberate judgment on this subject; but it is highly necessary to call attention to the fact that there is not anything peculiarly 'Asiatic' in the authentic horrors of Jhansi, Delhi and Cawnpore. In the outbreak of an exasperated people, and especially where a marked distinction of race adds rancour and terror to the feelings of the insurgents, extermination is always their plan. It was so during the Greek uprising of 1821, when upwards of twenty thousand Turks, a peaceful agricultural population—men, women and children—were murdered in cold blood *'as a necessary measure of wise policy,'* according to Hetairists, 'because the Turkish population in Greece was small and could not be removed.'*

The Duke of Cumberland and his followers were Europeans and Christians. What did they do upon their Scotch co-religionists and to a certain extent their fellow-countrymen?

"After the victory of Culloden the Duke of Cumberland advanced with the army into the Highlands, as far as fort Augustus, where he encamped. He then sent off detachments on all sides to hunt down the fugitives, and lay waste the country with fire and sword. The castles of Glengarry and Lochiel were plundered and burned; every house, hut, or habitation met with the same fate without distinction; all the cattle and provisions were carried off. The men were shot on the mountains, like wild beasts, or put to death in cold blood without form of trial. The women, after having seen their husbands and fathers murdered, were violated, and then turned out naked, with their children, to starve on the 'barrane' heaths. One whole family was shut up in a barn and burnt up to death.

"The Duke's ministers of vengeance carried out their work so promptly and thoroughly that in a few days there was neither house, cottage, man or beasts, to be seen in the compass of fifty miles. All was ruin and desolation, silence, solitude, and death."

We have also to consider whether, after the suppression of the Mutiny, innocent citizens were not unnecessarily killed. The truth of this assertion even the *Pioneer* does not deny. For that paper says:

"It is true that after the capture of cities like Lucknow and Cawnpore too many innocent Hindus were summarily tried and executed on the information given by their lying countrymen, which could not be sufficiently sifted."

Mark, the *Pioneer* says 'innocent Hindus' only were executed, as if 'too many innocent' Mussalmans also were not the victims of the wrath of the enraged natives of England engaged in the task of suppressing the Mutiny. But then we forget that the *Pioneer* has to befriend the Muhammadans and does not wish to remind them that too many of their innocent co-religionists were summarily tried and executed after the suppression of the Mutiny.

But was it on the information of the 'lying' natives of India that 'too many innocent Hindus were summarily tried and executed'? Let us see what English authors have to say on the subject. Kaye writes:

"Martial Law had been proclaimed; those terrible Acts passed by the Legislative Council in May and June were in full operation; and soldiers and civilians alike were holding Bloody Assizes, or slaying Natives without any assize at all, *regardless of sex or age.* Afterwards the thirst for blood

* Findlay's *Greek Revolution,* Volume I, pp. 172, 182, 187, 188." 'Torrens' *Empire in India,* p. 5.

grew stronger still. It is on the records of our British Parliament, in papers sent home by the Governor-General of India in Council, that 'the aged women, and children' are sacrificed, as well as those guilty of rebellion. They were not deliberately hanged, but burnt to death in their villages, perhaps now and then accidentally shot. Englishmen did not hesitate to boast or to record their boasting in writing, that they had spared no one, and that peppering away at niggers was very pleasant pastime, enjoyed amazingly. And it has been stated, in a book patronised by high official authorities, that 'for three months eight dead-carts daily went their rounds from sun-rise to sun-set to take down the corpses which hung at the cross-roads and market places' and that 'six thousand, beings had been thus 'summarily disposed of and launched into eternity',......An Englishman is almost suffocated with indignation when he reads that Mr. Chambers or Miss Jennings was hacked to death by a dusky ruffian, but in Native histories or, history being wanting, in native legends and traditions, it may be recorded against our people, that mothers and wives and children, with less familiar names, fell miserable victims to the first swoop of English vengeance, and these stories may have as deep a pathos as any that rend our own hearts. It may be, too, that the plea of provocation, which invests the most sanguinary acts of the white man in this deadly struggle with the attributes of righteous retribution, is not wholly to be rejected when urged in extenuation of the worst deeds of those who have never known Christian teaching."*

Sir Charles Dilke says:

"Those who doubt that Indian Military service makes soldiers careless of men's lives, reckless as to the rights of property, and disgraceful of human dignity, can hardly remember the letters which reached home in 1857, in which an officer in high command during the march upon Cawnpore reported, 'good bag to-day, polished off rebels,' it being borne in mind that the 'rebels' thus hanged or blown from guns were not taken in arms, but villagers apprehended 'on suspicion.' During this March atrocities were committed in the burning of villages and massacre of innocent inhabitants at which Mohamed Toglak himself would have stood ashamed, and it would be to contradict all history to assert that a succession of such deeds would not prove fatal to our liberties at home."†

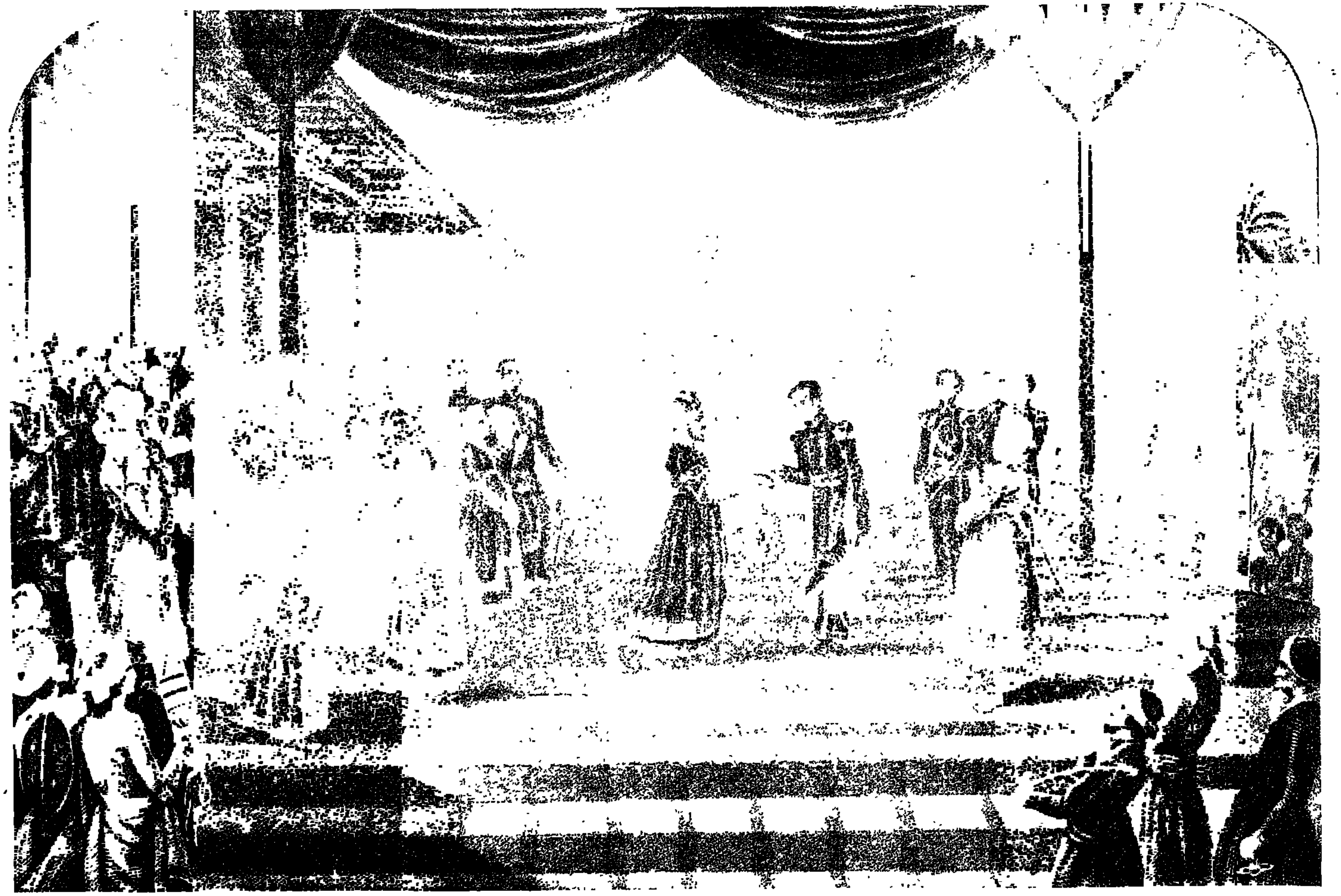
Again, the same author writes:

"The two favourite Anglo-Indian stories are that, of the native who being asked his religion, said 'Me Christian—me get drunk like Massa,' and that of the young officer who, learning Hindoostanee in 1858, had the difference between the negative "ne" and the particle "ne" explained to him by the moonshee, when he exclaimed, 'Dear me! I hanged lots of natives last year for admitting that they had not been in the villages for months. I suppose they meant to say that they had not left their villages for months. *It is certain that in the suppression of the Mutiny hundreds of natives were hanged by Queen's Officers who, unable to speak a word of any native language, could neither understand evidence nor defence.*"§

Many a joke has been cracked at the expense of the English-educated native of India for his quaint and unidiomatic use of the English language. Several books on "Babu" English have been written. But there was never any human life sacrificed by "Baboo English." On the other hand, many natives of England have murdered many Indians owing to their ignorance of Indian languages and of the customs and manners of the natives of India.

It is an ill-wind that blows nobody any good. Did the Mutiny then produce no

Kaye's *History of the Sepoy War*, Vol. II.
Dilke's *Greater Britain*.
Ibid



General Outram at the Durbar of the Raja of Travancore

beneficial effect? Certainly, the Mutiny was not without its lessons. Mr. Digby in his work, *India for Indians and for England* writes:

"Without shedding of blood there is no remission....The English people will learn by one way only. They would not displace the Company of merchants from supreme rule in India until there had been a frightful Mutiny due to misgovernment."

Mr. Justin McCarthy says:

"The Indian Mutiny startled the public feeling of England out of this state of unhealthy languor. . . Some eminent Englishmen were found to express alarm at the very sanguinary methods of repression and punishment that were in favour among most of our fellow-countrymen in India."†

It should be remembered that but for the Mutiny, the Proclamation of Queen Victoria, which is looked upon by the natives of India as the Magna Charta of their liberties, would never have been issued.

† *History of Our Own Times.*

CHAPTER XCV

THE TRANSFER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA FROM THE COMPANY TO THE CROWN

The charter of the East India Company used to be renewed after every twenty years. The period for which the Government of India was to be vested in the Company used to be specified in the Charter Act. The Company's Charter was renewed for the last time in 1853. But singularly enough, the period for which the Company was to sway the destinies of the peoples and princes of Hindustan was not specified therein. There was then something in the Act from which it was not unreasonable to deduce that the Company was doomed to extinction. The people of England were fast developing into an industrial nation. The free trade principle which they came to act upon, chiefly through the powerful speeches and writings of Cobden, Bright and other radicals in politics, and which was chiefly meant to make their bread cheap, made them naturally look upon India as supplying their bodily needs and satisfying their inner man. The sonorous and high-sounding phrase, 'development of the resources of India,' meant that India should be bled mercilessly and also that India was not to be for Indians, who should be treated as foes and aliens in the land of their birth. The existence of the East India Company stood in the way of the 'development of the resources of India' in that rapid manner which the natives of England desired.

Then again, the natives of England were desirous of colonising India and the East India Company stood in the way of their doing so.

These were perhaps the principal reasons which made the natives of England agitate for the abolition of the East India Company and the transfer of the Government to the Crown.

Whether such a transfer would be beneficial to the natives of India, never entered into the calculation of the agitators, whose conduct was being guided by the principle of 'enlightened selfishness.' They were only looking for an opportunity to get the object so dear to their heart effected. The outbreak of the Sepoy Revolt afforded them that opportunity. To prevent the recurrence of such an insurrection, the drastic remedy was proposed that the Government of India should be transferred from the Company to the Crown.

In the beginning of the year 1858, when the proposal of the transfer of the Government of India from the Company to the Crown was made by the natives of England, the East India Company presented a petition to both Houses of Parliament. It was presented to the House of Commons by Mr. J. Baring on the 9th and to the House of Lords by Earl Grey on the 11th February, 1858. The petition was drawn up by John Stuart Mill, who was an employe in the India House. This petition is reproduced as an appendix to this chapter.

The petitioners very pointedly drew the attention of the Houses to the doctrine which was then being promulgated "that India should be administered with an especial view to the benefit of the English who reside there."

As if to confirm and emphasise this doctrine, the House of Commons ordered on the 16th of March, 1858, the appointment of a Select Committee "to inquire into the progress and prospects, and the best means to be adopted for the promotion of European colonization and settlement in India, especially in the Hill Districts and healthier climates of that country ; as well as for the extension of our commerce with Central Asia."

After this, need any one wonder that the transfer of the Government of India from the Company to the Crown was made *solely* with the "view to the benefit of the English ?" The interests of the natives of India were meant to be sacrificed by the transfer for the benefit of the natives of England.

It is not necessary here to refer at length to the discussion and speeches which the Petition of the Company evoked in both Houses of Parliament. That able lawyer and writer, Sir George Lewis, made a speech in the House of Commons on the 12th February, 1858, in which he condemned the East India Company because

"It is a maxim in mechanics that nothing is stronger in a body than its weakest part. It is not at moments of calm and prosperity that defects in our institutions are discovered."

He was not for mending, but for ending the Company because of its "defects."

Such were the arguments of others also who took part in the discussions.

Sir Charles (afterwards Lord) Metcalfe had also written that it would be better for India, if her Government were transferred from the Company to the Crown. Said he:

"Although it seems to be a matter of indifference to the native population whether India be governed through the Company, or directly by the Ministers of the Crown, it is not so to another class of subjects.

"The Europeans settled in India, and not in the Company's service, and to these might be added generally the East Indians of mixed breed, will never be satisfied with the Company's Government. Well or ill founded, they will always attach to it the notion of monopoly and exclusion ; . . . For the contentment of this class, which, for the benefit of India and the security of our Indian Empire, ought greatly to increase in numbers and importance, the introduction of a King's Government is undoubtedly desirable. . . . .

"A King's Government is also the one which is most likely to be permanent, as the Company's hold under a Charter must be liable to periodical changes and reversions, whether for renewal or subversion."

At a later period of his life, Sir Charles Metcalfe, with a greatly enlarged knowledge of European politics, saw occasion to modify the opinion here expressed in favor of the Government of India directly by the Crown. Government by the Crown is in reality government by a parliamentary majority, and Sir Charles Metcalfe used to say, that, if that were applied to India, our tenure of the country would not be worth ten years' purchase."*

So the fate of the East India Company was sealed and India came under the direct rule of England.

* Kaye's *Selections from Metcalfe's Papers*, pp. 164-165.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XCV

PETITION OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

Presented to the House of Commons by Mr. J. Baring on 9th and to the House of Lords by Earl Grey on 11th February, 1858.

To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

Humbly sheweth,

That your Petitioners, at their own expense, and by the agency of their own civil and military servants, originally acquired for this country its magnificent empire in the East.

That the foundations of this empire were laid by your Petitioners, at that time neither aided nor controlled by Parliament, at the same period at which a succession of administrations under the control of Parliament were losing to the Crown of Great Britain another great empire on the opposite side of the Atlantic.

That during the period of about a century which has since elapsed, the Indian possessions of this country have been governed and defended from the resources of those possessions, without the smallest cost to the British Exchequer, which, to the best of your Petitioners' knowledge and belief, cannot be said of any other of the numerous foreign dependencies of the Crown.

That it being manifestly improper that the administration of any British possession should be independent of the general Government of the empire, Parliament provided, in 1783, that a department of the Imperial Government should have full cognizance of, and power of control over, the acts of your Petitioners in the administration of India; since which time the home branch of the Indian Government has been conducted by the joint counsels, and on the joint responsibility of your Petitioners and of a Minister of the Crown.

That this arrangement has at subsequent periods undergone reconsideration from the Legislature and various comprehensive and careful Parliamentary inquiries have been made into its practical operation; the result of which has been, on each occasion, a renewed grant to your Petitioners of the powers exercised by them in the administration of India.

That the last of these occasions was so recent as 1853, in which year the arrangements which had existed for nearly three-quarters of a century, were with certain modifications, re-enacted, and still subsist.

That, notwithstanding, your Petitioners have received an intimation from Her Majesty's Ministers of their intention to propose to Parliament a Bill for the purpose of placing the government of Her Majesty's East Indian dominion under the direct authority of the Crown—a change necessarily involving the abolition of the East India Company as an instrument of government.

That your Petitioners have not been informed of the reasons which have induced Her Majesty's Ministers, without any previous inquiry, to come to the resolution of putting an end to a system of administration, which Parliament, after inquiry, deliberately confirmed and sanctioned less than five years ago, and which, in its modified form, has not been in operation quite four years, and cannot be considered to have undergone a sufficient trial during that short period.

That your Petitioners do not understand that Her Majesty's Ministers impute any failure to those arrangements, or bring any charge, either great or small, against your Petitioners. But the time at which the proposal is made compels your Petitioners to regard it as arising from the calamitous events which have recently occurred in India.

Iswarchandra Vidyasagar

Drinkwater Bethune

That your Petitioners challenge the most searching investigation into the mutiny of the Bengal army, and the causes, whether remote or immediate, which produced that mutiny. They have instructed the Government of India to appoint a commission for conducting such an inquiry on the spot. And it is their most anxious wish that a similar inquiry may be instituted in this country by your [Lordships'] Honourable House; in order that it may be ascertained whether anything either in the constitution of the Home Government of India, or in the conduct of those by whom it has been administered, has had any share in producing the mutiny, or has in any way impeded the measures for its suppression; and whether the mutiny itself, or any circumstance connected with it, affords any evidence of the failure of the arrangements under which India is at present administered.

That, were it even true that these arrangements had failed, the failure could constitute no reason for divesting the East India Company of its functions, and transferring them to Her Majesty's Government. For, under the existing system, Her Majesty's Government have the deciding voice. The duty imposed upon the Court of Directors is to originate measures and frame drafts of instructions. Even had they been remiss in this duty, their remissness, however discreditable to themselves, could in no way absolve the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government, since the Minister for India possesses, and has frequently exercised, the power of requiring that the Court of Directors should take any subject into consideration, and prepare a draft despatch for his approval. Her Majesty's Government are thus in the fullest sense accountable for all that has been done, and for all that has been forborne or omitted to be done. Your Petitioners, on the other hand, are accountable only in so far as the act or omission has been promoted by themselves.

That, under these circumstances, if the administration of India had been a failure, it would, your Petitioners submit, have been somewhat unreasonable to expect that a remedy would be found in annihilating the branch of the ruling authority which could not be the one principally in fault, and might be altogether blameless, in order to concentrate all powers in the branch which had necessarily the decisive share in every error, real or supposed. To believe that the administration of India would have been more free from error had it been conducted by a Minister of the Crown without the aid of the Court of Directors, would be to believe that the Minister, with full power to govern India as he pleased, has governed ill because he had the assistance of experienced and responsible advisers.

That your Petitioners, however, do not seek to vindicate themselves at the expense of any other authority. They claim their full share of the responsibility of the manner in which India has practically been governed. That responsibility is to them not a subject of humiliation, but of pride. They are conscious that their advice and initiative have been, and have deserved to be, a great and potent element in the conduct of affairs in India. And they feel complete assurance that the more attention is bestowed and the more light thrown upon India and its administration, the more evident it will become that the government in which they have borne a part has been not only one of the purest in intention, but one of the most beneficent in act, ever known among mankind; that, during the last and present generation in particular, it has been, in all departments, one of the most rapidly improving governments in the world; and that, at the time when this change is proposed, a greater number of important improvements are in a state of more rapid progress than at any former period. And they are satisfied that whatever further improvements may be hereafter effected in India can only consist in the development of germs already planted, and in building on foundations already laid, under their authority, and in a great measure by their express instructions.

That such, however, is not the impression likely to be made on the public mind, either in England, or in India, by the ejection of your Petitioners from the place they fill in the Indian administration. It is not usual with statesmen to propose the complete abolition of a system of government, of which the practical operation is not condemned, and it might be generally inferred from the proposed measures, if carried into effect at the present time, that the East India Company having been intrusted with an important portion of the administration of India, have so abused

their trust as to have produced a sanguinary insurrection, and nearly lost India to the British empire; and that having thus crowned a long career of misgovernment, they have, in deference to public indignation, been deservedly cashiered for their misconduct.

That if the character of the East India Company were alone concerned, your Petitioners might be willing to await the verdict of history. They are satisfied that posterity will do them justice. And they are confident that even now justice is done to them in the minds, not only of Her Majesty's Ministers, but of all who have any claim to be competent judges of the subject. But though your Petitioners could afford to wait for the reversal of the verdict of condemnation which will be believed throughout the world to have been passed on them and their government by the British nation, your Petitioners cannot look without the deepest uneasiness at the effect likely to be produced on the minds of the people of India. To them, however incorrectly the name may express the fact, the British Government in India is the Government of the East India Company. To their minds the abolition of the Company will, for some time to come, mean the abolition of the whole system of administration with which the Company is identified. The measure, introduced simultaneously with the influx of an overwhelming British force, will be coincident with a general outcry, in itself most alarming to their fears, from most of the organs of opinion in this country as well as of English opinion in India, denouncing the past policy of the Government on the express ground that it has been too forbearing and too considerate towards the Natives. The people of India will at first feel no certainty that the new Government, or the Government under a new name which it is proposed to introduce, will hold itself bound by the pledges of its predecessors. They will be slow to believe that a Government has been destroyed only to be followed by another which will act on the same principles and adhere to the same measures. They cannot suppose that the existing organ of administration would be swept away without the intention of reversing any part of its policy. They will see the authorities, both at home and in India, surrounded by persons vehemently urging radical changes in many parts of that policy. And interpreting, as they must do, the change in the instrument of government, as a concession to these opinions and feeling, they can hardly fail to believe that, whatever else may be intended, the Government will no longer be permitted to observe that strict impartiality between those who profess those opinions and its native subjects which hitherto characterized it; that their strongest and most deeply-rooted feelings will henceforth be treated with much less regard than heretofore; and that a directly aggressive policy towards everything in their habits, or in their usages and customs, which Englishmen deem objectionable, will be no longer confined to individuals and private associations, but will be backed by all the power of Government.

And here your Petitioners think it important to observe that in abstaining as they have done from all interference with any of the religious practices of the people of India, except such as are abhorrent to humanity, they have acted not only from their own conviction of what is just and expedient but in accordance with the avowed intentions and express enactments of the Legislature, framed "in order that regard should be had to the civil and religious usages of the Natives," and also "that suits, civil and criminal, against the Natives," should be conducted according to such rules "as may accommodate the same to the religion and manners of the Natives." That their policy in this respect has been successful, is evidenced by the fact, that during a military mutiny, said to have been caused by unfounded apprehensions of danger to religion, the heads of the Native States, and the masses of the population, have remained faithful to the British Government. Your Petitioners need hardly observe how very different would probably have been the issue of the late events, if the Native princes, instead of aiding in the suppression of the rebellion, had put themselves at its head, or if the general population had joined in the revolt: and how probable it is that both these contingencies would have occurred, if any real ground had been given for the persuasion that the British Government intended to identify itself with proselytism. And it is the honest conviction of your Petitioners that any serious apprehension of a change of policy in this respect would be likely to be followed, at no distant period, by a general rising throughout India.

That your Petitioners have seen with the greatest pain the demonstrations of indiscriminate animosity towards the natives of India, on the part of our countrymen in India and at home, which have grown up since the late unhappy events. They believe these sentiments to be fundamentally unjust; they know them to be fatal to the possibility of good government in India. They feel that if such demonstrations should continue, and especially if weight be added to them by legislating under their supposed influence, no amount of wisdom and forbearance on the part of the Government will avail to restore that confidence of the governed in the intentions of their rulers without which it is vain even to attempt the improvement of the people.

That your Petitioners cannot contemplate without dismay the doctrine now widely promulgated that India should be administered with an especial view to the benefit of the English who reside there; or that in its administration any advantage should be sought for Her Majesty's subjects of European birth, except that which they will necessarily derive from their superiority of intelligence, and from the increased prosperity of the people, the improvement of the productive resources of the country, and the extension of commercial intercourse. Your Petitioners regard it as the most honourable characteristic of the government of India by England, that it has acknowledged no such distinction as that of a dominant and a subject race but has held that its first duty was to the people of India. Your Petitioners feel that a great portion of the hostility with which they are assailed, is caused by the belief that they are peculiarly the guardians of this principle, and that so long as they have any voice in the administration of India, it cannot easily be infringed. And your Petitioners will not conceal their belief that their exclusion from any part in the Government is likely, at the present time, to be regarded in India as a first successful attack on that principle.

That your Petitioners, therefore, most earnestly represent to your [Lordships] Honourable House, that even if the contemplated change could be proved to be in itself advisable, the present is a most unsuitable time for entertaining it; and they most strongly and respectfully urge on your [Lordships'] Honourable House the expediency of at least deferring any such change until it can be effected at a period when it would not be, in the minds of the people of India, directly connected with the recent calamitous events, and with the feelings to which those events have either given rise or have afforded an opportunity of manifestation. Such postponement, your Petitioners submit, would allow time for a more mature consideration than has yet been given, or can be given in the present excited state of the public mind, to the various questions connected with the organization of a government for India; and would enable the most competent minds in the nation calmly to examine whether any new arrangement can be devised for the home Government of India uniting a greater number of the conditions of good administration than the present; and if so, which among the numerous schemes which have been, or may be, proposed, possesses those requisites in the greatest degree.

That your Petitioners have always willingly acquiesced in any changes which, after discussion by Parliament, were deemed conducive to the general welfare, although such changes may have involved important sacrifices to themselves. They would refer to their partial relinquishment of trade in 1813; to its total abandonment, and the placing of their Commercial Charter in abeyance, in 1833; to the transfer to India of their commercial assets, amounting to £15,858,000, a sum greatly exceeding that ultimately repayable to them in respect of their capital, iudependent of territorial rights and claims; and to their concurrence, in 1853, in the measure by which the Court of Directors was reconstructed, and reduced to its present number. In the same spirit, your Petitioners would most gladly co-operate with Her Majesty's Government in correcting any defects which may be considered to exist in the details of the present system; and they would be prepared, without a murmur, to relinquish their trust altogether, if a better system for the control of the Government of India can be devised. But, as they believe that in the construction of such a system there are conditions which cannot, without the most dangerous consequences, be departed from, your Petitioners respectfully and deferentially submit to the judgment of your [Lordships'] Honourable House their view of those conditions; in the hope that if your [Lordships'] Honourable House should see reason to agree in that view, you

will withhold your legislative sanction from any arrangement for the Government of India which does not fulfil the conditions in question in at least an equal degree with the present.

That your Petitioners may venture to assume that it will not be proposed to vest the home portion of the administration of India in a Minister of the Crown, without the adjunct of a Council composed of statesmen experienced in Indian affairs. Her Majesty's Ministers cannot but be aware that the knowledge necessary for governing a foreign country, and in particular a country like India, requires as much special study as any other profession, and cannot possibly be possessed by any one who has not devoted a considerable portion of his life to the acquisition of it.

That in constituting a body of experienced advisers to be associated with the Indian Minister, your Petitioners consider it indispensable to bear in mind that this body should not only be qualified to advise the Minister, but also, by its advice, to exercise, to a certain degree, a moral check. It cannot be expected that the Minister, as a general rule, should himself know India, while he will be exposed to perpetual solicitations from individuals and bodies, entirely ignorant of that country, or knowing only enough to impose on those who know still less than themselves, and having very frequently objects in view other than the interests or good government of India. The influences likely to be brought to bear on him through the organs of popular opinion will, in the majority of cases, be equally misleading. The public opinion of England, itself necessarily unacquainted with Indian affairs, can only follow the promptings of those who take most pains to influence it, and these will generally be such as have some private interest to serve. It is, therefore, your Petitioners submit, of the utmost importance that any council which may form a part of the Home Government of India should derive sufficient weight from its constitution, and from the relation it occupies to the Minister, to be a substantial barrier against those inroads of self-interest and ignorance in this country from which the Government of India has hitherto been comparatively free, but against which it would be too much to expect that Parliament should of itself afford a sufficient protection.

That your Petitioners cannot well conceive a worse form of Government for India than a Minister with a Council whom he should be at liberty to consult or not at his pleasure, or whose advice he should be able to disregard, without giving his reasons in writing, and in a manner likely to carry conviction. Such an arrangement, your Petitioners submit, would be really liable to the objections, in their opinion, erroneously urged against the present system. Your Petitioners respectfully represent that any body of persons associated with the Minister, which is not a check, will be a screen. Unless the Council is so constituted as to be personally independent of the Minister, unless it feels itself responsible for recording an opinion on every Indian subject and pressing that opinion on the Minister, whether it is agreeable to him or not ; and unless the Minister when he overrules their opinion, is bound to record his reasons, their existence will only serve to weaken his responsibility, and to give the colourable sanction of prudence and experience, to measures in the framing of which those qualities have had no share.

That it would be vain to expect that a new Council could have as much moral influence, and power of asserting its opinion with effect, as the Court of Directors. A new body can no more succeed to the feelings and authority which their antiquity and their historical antecedents give to the East India Company than a legislature under a new name, sitting in Westminster, would have the moral ascendancy of the Houses of Lords and Commons. One of the most important elements of usefulness will thus he necessarily wanting in any newly constituted Indian Council, as compared with the present.

That your Petitioners find it difficult to conceive that the same independence in judgment and act, which characterizes the Court of Directors, will be found in any council all of whose Members are nominated by the Crown. Owing their nomination to the same authority, many of them probably to the same individual Minister, whom they are appointed to check, and looking to him alone for their reappointment, their desire of recommending themselves to him, and their unwillingness to risk his displeasure by any serious resistance to his wishes, will be motives too strong not to be in danger of exercising a powerful and injurious influence over their conduct. Nor are your Petitioners aware of any mode in which that injurious influence could be guarded against, except by conferring

the appointments, like those of the judges, during good behaviour; which, by rendering it impossible to correct an error once committed, would be seriously objectionable.

That your Petitioners are equally unable to perceive how, if the controlling body is entirely nominated by the Minister, that happy independence of Parliamentary and party influence, which has hitherto distinguished the administration of India and the appointments to situations of trust and importance in that country, can be expected to continue. Your Petitioners believe that in no Government known to history have appointments to offices, and especially to high offices, been so rarely bestowed on any other considerations than those of personal fitness. This characteristic, but for which in all probability India would long since have been lost to this country, is, your Petitioners conceive, entirely owing to the circumstance that the dispensers of patronage have been persons unconnected with party, and under no necessity of conciliating Parliamentary support, that, consequently, the appointments to offices in India have been, as a rule, left to the unbiassed judgment of the local authorities, while the nominations to the civil and military services have been generally bestowed on the middle classes, irrespective of political considerations, and, in a large proportion, on the relatives of persons who had distinguished themselves by their services in India.

That your Petitioners, therefore, think it essential that at least a majority of the Council which assists the Minister for India with its advice, should hold their seats independently of his appointment.

That it is, in the opinion of your Petitioners, no less necessary that the order of the transaction of business should be such as to make the participation of the Council in the administration of India a substantial one. That to this end, it is, in the opinion of your Petitioners, indispensable that the despatches to India should not be prepared by the Minister and laid before the Council, but should be prepared by the Council and submitted to the Minister. This would be in accordance with the natural and obvious principle that persons chosen for their knowledge of a subject should suggest the mode of dealing with it, instead of merely giving their opinion on suggestions coming from elsewhere. This is also the only mode in which the members of the Council can feel themselves sufficiently important or sufficiently responsible to secure their applying their minds to the subjects before them. It is almost unnecessary for your Petitioners to observe, that the mind is called into far more vigorous action by being required to propose than by merely being called on to assent. The Minister has necessarily the ultimate decision. If he has also the initiative, he has all the powers which are of any practical moment. A body whose only recognized function was to find fault, would speedily let that function fall into desuetude. They would feel that their co-operation in conducting the government of India was not really desired; that they were only felt as a clog on the wheels of business. Their criticism on what had been decided without their being collectively consulted would be felt as importunate, as mere delay and impediment, and their office would probably be seldom sought but by those who were willing to allow its most important duties to become nominal.

That with the duty of preparing the despatches to India, would naturally be combined the nomination and control of the home establishments. This your Petitioners consider absolutely essential to the utility of the Council. If the officers through whom they work are in direct dependence upon an authority higher than theirs, all matters of importance will in reality be settled between the Minister and the subordinates, passing over the Council altogether.

That a third consideration, to which your Petitioners attach great importance, is, that the number of the Council should not be too restricted. India is so wide a field, that a practical acquaintance with every part of its affairs cannot be found combined in any small number of individuals. The Council ought to contain men of general experience and knowledge of the world; also men especially qualified by finance and revenue experience, by judicial experience, diplomatic experience, military experience. It ought to contain persons conversant with the varied social relations and varied institutions of Bengal, Madras, Bombay, the North-Western Provinces, the Punjab, and the Native States. Even the present Court of Directors, reduced as it is in numbers by the Act of 1853, does not contain all the varieties of knowledge and

experience desirable in such a body. Neither, your Petitioners submit, would it be safe to limit the number to that which would be strictly sufficient, supposing all the appointments to be the best possible. A certain margin should be allowed for failures, which, even with the most conscientious selection, will sometimes occur. Your Petitioners, moreover, cannot overlook the possibility that, if the nomination takes place by a Minister at the head of a political party, it will not always be made with exclusive reference to personal qualifications : and it is indispensable to provide that such errors or faults in the nominating authority, so long as they are only occasional, shall not seriously impair the efficiency of the body.

That while these considerations plead strongly for a body not less numerous than the present, even if only regarded as advisers of the Minister, their other office, as a check on the minister, forms, your Petitioners submit, a no less forcible objection to any considerable reduction of the present number. A body of six or eight will not be equal to one of eighteen in that feeling of independent self-reliance which is necessary to induce a public body to press its opinion on a Minister to whom that opinion is unacceptable. However unobjectionable in other respects so small a body may be constituted, reluctance to give offence will be likely, unless in extreme cases, to be a stronger habitual inducement in their minds than the desire to stand up for their convictions.

That if, in the opinion of your [Lordships'] Honourable House, a body can be constituted which unites the above enumerated requisites of good government in a greater degree than the Court of Directors, your Petitioners have only to express their humble hope that your endeavours for that purpose may be successful. But if, in enumerating the conditions of a good system of home government for India, your Petitioners have in fact enumerated the qualities possessed by the present system, then your Petitioners pray that your [Lordships'] Honourable House will continue the existing powers of the Court of Directors.

That your Petitioners are aware that the present Home Government of India is reproached with being a double Government ; and that any arrangement by which an independent check is provided to the discretion of the Minister will be liable to a similar reproach. But they conceive that this accusation originates in an entire misconception of the functions devolving on the Home Government of India, and in the application to it of the principles applicable to purely executive departments. The executive Government of India is and must be, seated in India itself. The Court of Directors is not so much an executive as a deliberative body. Its principal function, and that of the Home Government generally, is not to direct the details of administration, but to scrutinize and revise the past acts of the Indian Government ; to lay down principles, and issue general instructions for their future guidance, and to give or refuse sanction to great political measures, which are referred home for approval. These duties are more analogous to the function of Parliament, than to those of an Executive Board : and it might almost as well be said that Parliament, as that the Government of India, should be constituted on the principles applicable to Executive Boards. It is considered an excellence, not a defect, in the constitution of Parliament, to be not merely a double but a triple Government. An executive authority, your Petitioners submit, may often with advantage be single, because promptitude is its first requisite. But the function of passing a deliberate opinion on past measures, and laying down principles of future policy, is a business which, in the estimation of your Petitioners, admits of and requires the concurrence of more judgments than one. It is no defect in such a body to be double, and no excellence to be single : especially when it can only be made so by cutting off that branch of it which by previous training is always the best prepared and often the only one which is prepared at all, for its peculiar duty.

That your Petitioners have heard it asserted that, in consequence of what is called the double Government, the Indian authorities are less responsible to Parliament and the nation, than other departments of the government of the Empire, since it is impossible to know on which of the two branches of Home Government the responsibility ought to rest. Your Petitioners fearlessly affirm, that this impression is not only groundless, but the very reverse of the truth. The Home

Government of India is not less, but more responsible, than any other branch of the administration of the State; inasmuch as the President of the Board of Commissioners, who is the Minister for India, is as completely responsible as any other of Her Majesty's ministers, and in addition, his advisers also are responsible. It is always certain, in the case of India, that the President of the Board of Commissioners must have either commanded or sanctioned all that has been done. No more than this, your Petitioners submit, can be known in the case of the head of any department of Her Majesty's Government. For it is not, nor can it rationally be supposed, that any Minister of the Crown is without trusted advisers; and the Minister for India must, for obvious reasons, be more dependent than any other of Her Majesty's Ministers, upon the advice of persons whose lives have been devoted to the subject on which their advice has been given. But in the case of India, such advisers are assigned to him by the constitution of the Government, and they are as much responsible for what they advise as he for what he ordains: while in other departments the Minister's official advisers are the subordinates in his office—men often of great skill and experience, but not in the public eye; often unknown to the public even by name; official reserve precludes the possibility of ascertaining what advice they give, and they are responsible only to the Minister himself. By what application of terms this can be called responsible government, and the joint government of your Petitioners and the India Board an irresponsible Government, your Petitioners think it unnecessary to ask.

That without knowing the plan on which Her Majesty's Ministers contemplate the transfer to the Crown of the servants of the Company, your Petitioners find themselves unable to approach the delicate question of the Indian Army further than to point out that the high military qualities of the officers of that army have unquestionably sprung in a great degree from its being a principal and substantive army, holding Her Majesty's commission and enjoying equal rank with Her Majesty's officers, and your Petitioners would earnestly deprecate any change in that position.

That your Petitioners, having regard to all these considerations, humbly pray your Honourable House, that you will not give your sanction to any change in the constitution of the Indian Government during the continuance of the present unhappy disturbances, nor without a full previous inquiry into the operations of the present system. And your Petitioners further pray that this inquiry may extend to every department of Indian administration. Such an inquiry, your Petitioners respectfully claim, not only as a matter of justice to themselves, but because, when for the first time in this century, the thoughts of every public man in the country are fixed on India, an inquiry would be more thorough, and its results would carry much more instruction to the mind of Parliament and of the country, than at any preceding period.

CHAPTER XCVI

THE PROCLAMATION OF QUEEN VICTORIA

The Sepoy Mutiny had not been yet quelled when the Government of India was transferred from the Company to the Crown. Under the circumstance it was the most diplomatic move on the part of Queen Victoria and her advisers to issue the Proclamation. It was calculated to smooth the ruffled feelings of the people and reconcile them to the rule of England. And the Proclamation succeeded most admirably in its object or objects.

The natives of India, in the simplicity of their hearts, look upon the Proclamation as the Magna Charta of their liberties. Much nonsense is talked by those who take their stand on this Proclamation and demand equal rights and privileges with British citizens. Such deluded men should be reminded of what the celebrated English historian' Freeman, wrote of proclamations in general.

"...But when we come to manifestoes, proclamations,...here we are in the very chosen region of lies,...He is of childlike simplicity indeed who believes every act of Parliament, as telling us not only what certain august persons did, but the motives which led them to do it ; so is he who believes that the verdict and sentence of every court was necessarily perfect righteousness, even in times where orders were sent beforehand for the trial and execution of such a man."*

They should also be reminded of what that well-known jurist, Sir James Stephen, said regarding the Queen's Proclamation. That eminent lawyer said that the Proclamation was merely a ceremonial document. It was not a treaty, and so it did not impose any responsibility and obligation on the English people.

We should not also forget why it was necessary to issue the Proclamation in November, 1858—a proclamation full of noble and philanthropic sentiments. Ever since the outbreak of the Mutiny, the stay-at-home natives of England were talking of avenging the ill-treatment which their kith and kin had received in India at the hands of the natives. India was no longer to be governed for the benefit of the natives of India. A Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed in March, 1858, "to inquire into the progress and prospects, and the best means to be adopted for the promotion of European colonization and settlement in India, especially in the Hill Districts and healthier climates of that country, as well as for the extension of our commerce with Central Asia."

It was under the above circumstances necessary to do something to cover the ulterior designs of the English people by the show of philanthropy. This most probably accounts for the genesis of the proclamation.

Assuming even for the sake of argument that Queen Victoria issued that proclamation out of love for the people of India, that is to say, that she was prompted

* Freeman's *Methods of Historical Study*, London, 1886, pp. 258-259.

by pure philanthropy, she knew that, being a constitutional sovereign, she could not compel her ministers to carry into execution all that she had laid down in the Proclamation. The English monarch is merely an ornamental figure-head and hence the English proverb which says that kings and queens can do no wrong. The converse of that proverb is also applicable to the kings and queens of England, that is, they cannot set any wrong right. They cannot go against the wishes of the English people. It is on record that the Proclamation, when first drafted by one of the Ministers of the Queen, did not meet with her approval. In the *Review of Reviews* for April, 1897, W. T. Stead wrote :

"The Queen was abroad when the first draft of the Proclamation reached her. It was a miserable, jejune document, without heart in it or religion, and withal it had the incredible ill-taste to allude to the power the Government possessed of undermining native religions and customs. The Queen was revolted at the threat. The Proclamation would never do : —

"Her Majesty disapproves of the expression which declares that she has the power of 'undermining the Indian religions'. Her Majesty would prefer that the subject should be introduced in a declaration in the sense that 'the deep attachment which Her Majesty feels to her own religion, and the comfort and happiness which she derives from its consolation, will preclude her from any attempt to interfere with the native religions, and that her servants will be directed to act scrupulously in accordance with her directions.'

"But she was not satisfied with merely indicating objections in detail ; she had the whole Proclamation rewritten. She wrote:

"'The Queen would be glad if Lord Derby would write it himself in his excellent language, bearing in mind that it is a female Sovereign who speaks to more than a hundred millions of Eastern people on assuming the direct government of them and after a bloody civil war, giving them pledges which her future reign is to redeem and explaining the principles of her government. Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive on being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following the train of civilisation.'

"The Proclamation was rewritten 'entirely in the spirit of your Majesty's observations.' But still the Queen was not quite satisfied, so she added in her own hand to the last sentence these words :

"'May the God of all power grant to us and those in authority under us strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people !'"

The Queen being an intelligent sovereign knew that the original proclamation, as drafted by her Ministers would have estranged, the feelings of the people of India and so had the phraseology of the Proclamation altered.

But the people of India are of childlike simplicity to have put any faith in the Proclamation. One is forced into the belief that the Proclamation was issued to cover the ulterior designs of the English people for the exploitation of India.*

* See the chapter on Queen's Proclamation in my "Consolidation of the Christian Power in India."

Also, see John Malcolm Ludlow's "Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown towards the Princes and Peoples of India," Panini Office Reprint.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XCVI

PROCLAMATION BY THE QUEEN IN COUNCIL TO THE PRINCES, CHIEFS, AND PEOPLE OF INDIA

Victoria, by the grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Colonies and Dependencies thereof in Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Australia, Queen, Defender of the Faith.

Whereas, for divers weighty reasons, we have resolved by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, to take upon ourselves the Government of the territories in India heretofore administered in trust for us by the Honourable East India Company.

Now, therefore, we do by these presents notify and declare that, by the advice and consent aforesaid, we have taken upon ourselves the said government ; and we hereby call upon all our subjects within the said territories to be faithful, and to bear true allegiance to us, our heirs and successors, and to submit themselves to the authority of those whom we may hereafter, from time to time, see fit to appoint to administer the government of our said territories, in our name and on our behalf.

And we, reposing special trust and confidence in the loyalty, ability, and judgment of our right trusty and well-beloved cousin and counsellor, Charles John, Viscount Canning, do hereby constitute and appoint him, the said Viscount Canning, to be our first Viceroy and Governor-General in and over our said territories and to administer the government thereof in our name, and generally to act in our name and on our behalf, subject to such orders and regulations as he shall, from time to time, receive from us through one of our principal Secretaries of State.

And we do hereby confirm in their several offices, civil and military, all persons now employed in the service of the Honourable East India Company, subject to our future pleasure, and to such laws and regulations as may hereafter be enacted.

We hereby announce to the native princes of India that all treaties and engagements made with them by or under the authority of the Honourable East India Company are by us accepted, and will be scrupulously maintained, and we look for the like observance on their part.

We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions ; and while we will permit no aggression upon our dominions or our rights to be attempted with impunity, we shall sanction no encroachment on those of others. We shall respect the right, dignity, and honour of native princes as our own : and we desire that they, as well as our own subjects, should enjoy that prosperity, and that social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government.

We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.

Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law ; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure.

And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge.

We know, and respect, the feelings of attachment with which the natives of India regard the lands inherited by them from their ancestors, and we desire to protect them in all rights connected therewith, subject to the equitable demands of the State; and we will that, generally, in framing and administering the law, due regard be paid to the ancient rights, usages, and customs of India.

We deeply lament the evils and misery which have been brought upon India by the acts of ambitious men, who have deceived their countrymen by false reports, and led them into open rebellion. Our power has been shown by the suppression of that rebellion in the field; we desire to show our mercy by pardoning the offences of those who have been thus misled, but who desire to return to the path of duty.

Already, in one province, with a view to stop the further effusion of blood, and to hasten the pacification of our Indian dominions, our Viceroy and Governor-General has held out the expectation of pardon, on certain terms, to the great majority of those who, in the late unhappy disturbances, have been guilty of offences against our Government, and has declared the punishment which will be inflicted on those whose crimes place them beyond the reach of forgiveness. We approve and confirm the said act of our Viceroy and Governor-General, and do further announce and proclaim as follows:

Our clemency will be extended to all offenders, save and except those who have been, or shall be, convicted of having directly taken part in the murder of British subjects. With regard to such the demands of justice forbid the exercise of mercy.

To those who have willingly given asylum to murderers, knowing them to be such, or who may have acted as leaders or instigators in revolt, their lives alone can be guaranteed; but, in apportioning the penalty due to such persons, full consideration will be given to the circumstances under which they have been induced to throw off their allegiance; and large indulgence will be shown to those whose crimes may appear to have originated in the credulous acceptance of the false reports circulated by designing men.

To all others in arms against the Government we hereby promise unconditional pardon, amnesty, and oblivion of all offence against ourselves, our crown, and dignity, on their return to their homes and peaceful pursuits.

It is our royal pleasure, that these terms of grace and amnesty should be extended to all those who comply with these conditions before the 1st day of January next.

When, by the blessing of Providence, internal tranquillity shall be restored, it is our earnest desire to stimulate the peaceful industry of India, to promote works of public utility and improvement, and to administer its government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us, and to those in authority under us, strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people.

CHAPTER XCVII

THE END OF THE COMPANY'S RULE

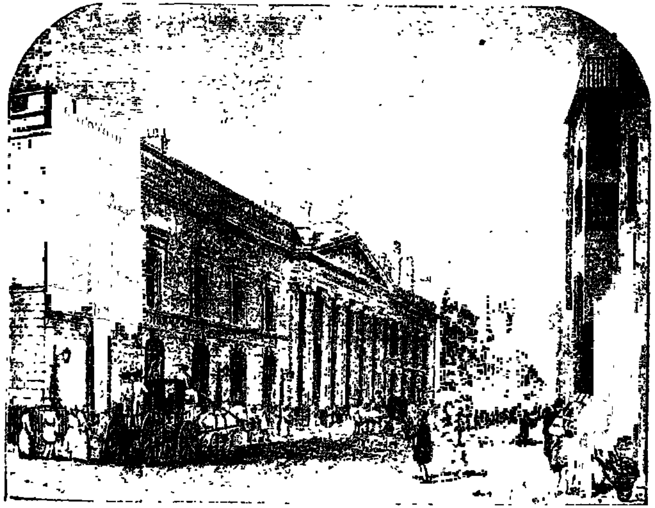
With the Proclamation of Queen Victoria, read by Lord Canning on the 1st of November, 1858, in Allahabad, terminated the rule of the East India Company. Allahabad forms an important landmark in the history of the Christian Power in India; for, it was here that Clive obtained the Dewany of Bengal from Shah Alam on the 12th of August 1765. The termination of the government of the Christian merchant "adventurers" who were "not gentlemen," was announced in that city standing at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamna. The natives of Great Britain were certainly not proud of the rise of the Christian Power in India, or of the deeds of the East India Company which won an empire for them in the Orient. Writes an English historian that—

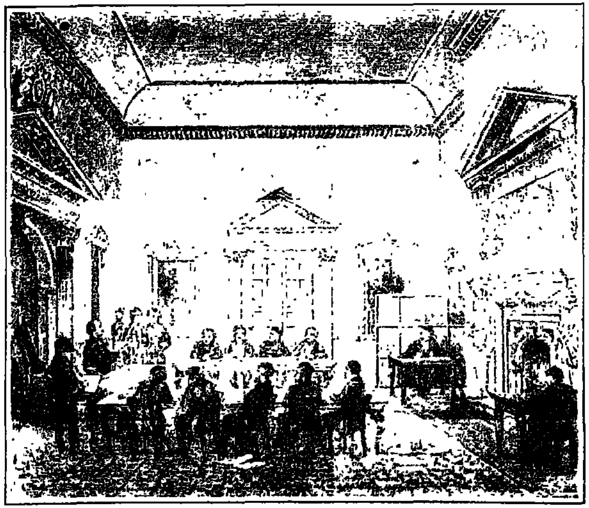
"The establishment of the English power in India is an ugly one. It begins in feebleness and cowardice, it is pervaded by rapacity, it closes with a course of fraud and falsehood, of forgery and treason, as stupendous as ever lay at the foundation of a great empire. My Lord Macaulay, in that brilliant passage which opens his biographical sketch of Clive, expresses his astonishment at the little interest which we take in the story. I do not know any stronger instance of the short-sightedness of clever men when they only recognise the moral sense as something to flavour a narrative, as you might flavour a pudding with allspice or with mace. Our own consciences will long, ere this, have given the answer. . . It is the instinctive hypocrisy of shame which has kept us Englishmen aloof from the tale of the rise of our Indian empire. I suppose that the son of a transported convict in Sydney, whose father has won a fortune for him, who is rising in station and consideration himself, who is received at Government house, subscribes to charities, sits in front-pews at church, likes nothing less than to be reminded of the notorious robberies and burglaries by which his father won for himself a free passage to the antipodes, and if they happen to be recorded in the Newgate Calendar, would only be the more careful to exclude that exciting work from his library. Is it not so with us? Is it not in human nature that we should dislike to be reminded of the crimes which Clive and Warren Hastings, and all that shameless generation which surrounded them, committed for our benefit? I thank God that, until the Whig essayist and cabinet minister, no man had yet had the hardihood to see the picturesqueness of this shameful story, to measure its capabilities as the subject of a brilliant article in a review."*

The passage quoted above shows how the Indian empire of the East India Company was gradually built up. The merchant "adventurers" never scrupled to make use of any means, fair or foul, to get their purposes served, and amass earthly riches, play the "nabobs" and promote industries in their native land from the "plunders piled from kingdoms not their own." It was thus that England destroyed the trade and industries of India.

Regarding the government of the East India Company the author quoted above wrote:

* *British India, its Races and its History*, by John Malcolm Ludlow, Vol. I, pp. 198-199.

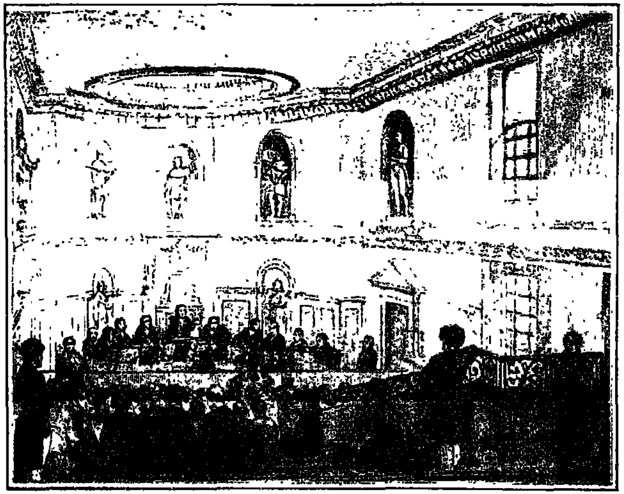




Centre – The East India House

Left—The Court of Directors, East India House

Right—The Court of Proprietors, East India House



"The present system of Indian Government of which that body forms yet the most prominent organs,—cumbrous, wasteful, inefficient, and dishonest as a piece of administrative machinery—, as a form of rule peculiarly ill adopted to fix the affections and loyalty of the native races of India,—has failed in practice in every one of the requisites of good government.

"It has failed to give security to person or property throughout by far the greater portion of India: sometimes by leaving the subject exposed to the open violence of brigands; always by placing him at the mercy of oppressive and fraudulent officials.

"The judicial system is dilatory, costly, and inefficient.

"The revenue system—contrary to almost every sound principle of political economy—seems devised in its different branches so as to promote the largest possible amount of oppression, extortion, and immorality.

"As a matter of fact, the population are in most parts of the country sinking alike in physical condition, and in moral character.

"Many of the above-mentioned evils are of British introduction; others have been aggravated under British rule.

"The good which has been done,—due in almost every instance to the special *efforts of individuals*, and generally thwarted at first,—has been for the most part extremely trifling, or partial and superficial.*

"The most magnificent public works, such as the Canals of the North, and its one metalled road become wholly insignificant when compared with the vast number of works executed in native times,—many, in some districts, most of which remains yet in a state of decay, though the cess payable for their maintenance or the increased assessment due in respect of the surplus value which they are supposed to create, may still be exacted.

"A wholly new vice—drunkenness—has been introduced among the Hindoo population, is largely spreading and is fostered by the exigencies of the public revenue.

"In that part of India which lies most open to independent observation—Bengal,—sullen discontent is declared to characterise the rural population.†

No one can deny the fact that India has benefited by the abolition of "the Society of Adventurers" called the East India Company.

For an account of how the Company governed India, see "Government of India under a Bureaucracy" by John Dickinson, Jan., reprinted by the present writer.

* "The famines of particular districts which revenue oppression did not allow the cultivator to meet when they occurred, which public works could invariably have prevented, must have swept away more lives than the lauded "humane" measures of the suppression of suttee, infanticide, etc., can ever have preserved.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 335-337.

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INDEX

Page

Abbott, Captain
excites the Hazarees 904
his estimate of Chatar Singh 898
—persecution of Sikhs on the death of Canora 899
—treatment of Jhanda Singh 900
Abdul Gafur Khan
his desertion on the battle field 726
Abdullah Khan
advises abolition of Poll Tax 254
his conflict with the Marathas 252
Acton, Lord 12
Adams, Major
his death 174
his reply to Mir Kasim 161-62
offers bribe to Gentil 163
officiates as Governor-General 738
takes command against Mir Kasim 157
Adina Beg
instigates Raghunath Rao to invade the Punjab 134
Afghans
revolt against the English 821
Afghan Politics
death of Shah Shuja, Burnes and Macnaghten 822
Afghan Ruler
Russian influence on 815
Afghan War
and the Battle of Plassey 819
the First 810
—a positive sin on the part of the British 832
its genesis 812
Afghan War, the Second 949
Agnew, Mr.
appointed Political Agent at Multan 893
his death 894
observations on Multan 893
Aga-aaly-toork 150
Ahalya Bai
head of the Holkar House 230
Ahmed Shah Abdali 133
his victory at Panipat, 136
invasion of India 134
Ahmad Shah
succeeds Muhammad Shah 259
Ahmadnagar
capture of 521
Ahmed Ali 299
Akshay Kumar Maitra
Black Hole, a myth 58
Akbar
and the Province of Guzerat 477
and the Hindoos 531
as painted by Tod 662
his policy regarding the Hindus 535
Akbar Khan
his Treaty with the English 821
Akalis
as Metcalfe's escort 613-14
Alam Gir
de^th of 113

Page

Albuquerque, Alphonso de 19
Ali Vardi Khan 46, 57, 60
and the English Christians 44
his dying advice to Shiraj, a 'specious fable' 59
—policy 101
Ali Murad
a traitor in the camp of the Amirs 839
Alinagar
changed name of Calcutta 62
Terms of the Treaty 72-73
the Treaty of 69
Allahabad, Fort of
captured by the English 179
Ali Gauhar
afterwards Shah Alam 134
Ali Muhammad 240
Alamgir II 134
Aliwal and Subraon
battles of 878-79
Ali Jah
his rebellion against the Nizam 296
Amar Singh 524,562
is more than a match for General Ochterlony 644
warns Nepal Government against the British 649
Amar Sing, Raja of Tanjore 352,353
reinstated 355-356
American War of Independence
the part played by Cornwallis 266
Amherst, Lord 747, 750,767
as an honest man 737
—and the expenses of the Burmese War and Bharatpur Campaign 770
his visit to the Mughal Emperor 771
receives mission from Ranjit Singh 772
the administration of— 738
Amina Begam
her interest in the English merchants 57
Amin Chand
as adviser to Mr. Watts 75
Amir Khan
as Controller of Holkar's Dominions 593
as free booter, 656
bought by the English 521
his allegations gainst Bapuji Sindhia 539
—and the Nizam 440
his reasons for invading Berar 598
—secret understanding with the English 559
—shady transactions with the English 441
—subsidized by the British 597
intrigues with the English 725
—treaty with the English 518
treachery with Holkar 516
protests against the Company rendering aid to the Raja of Berar 599
Amirs of Sindh
new Treaty enforced on 817
treatment received from the British 817
Amir Chand (or Omichand) 54, 85
accommodates Krishnadas, 49
as tool of Mr. Watts 89

Page
insanity and death of 97
persuades Nanda Kumar to betray Shiraj 132
threatens the English 91
Amyatt 126, 155
and reinstatement of Custom Duties 149
as English Envoy to Shiraj's Durbar 71
—sent to negotiate Treaty with Nawab 154
his deputation to the Nawab 147
waylaid and killed 150
Amrut Rao
and the Holkar 392, 403
Anderson, Rev. Philip
English as seen by Hindus and Mussalmans, according to— 41
The English in Western India— 358
Anderson, Lieut.
as Assistant Political Agent at Multan 893
Anstruther, Sir John 332
—his partisanship for Wellesley 339
Anwaroody Cawn 66
Appa Saheb 714
accepts terms profferred by Jenkins 715
—and Ranjit Singh 723
—charged with the murder of Pursaji 705
—and that of his cousin 719
events preceding hostilities 703
his escape from confinement 721
proposals to Mr. Jenkins declined 717
Raja of Nagpur 701
receives ill-treatment from the English 706
—his loss of independece 716
—made a prisoner 720
sends messenger to Jenkins expressing regret 712
Subsidiary Alliance with the English 704-05
—troops' opposition to terms 713
supposed shelter in the Fort of Asirgarh 728
wants modification in the terms 709-710
Archer, Major 754, 755, 771
confers the title of King on the Nawab 729
—the Coronation of the Nawab 730
on the necessity of war with Burma 748-49
—on atrocities committed by British officers 769
remarks on the Burmese war 766
Argaum, Battle of 474
Argyle, Duke of—(Secretary of State for India)
—on Political Residents' interference 36
Armenians
—their treachery towards the Nawab 161
Arnold, Sir Edwin
—his views on Dalhousie's administration 949
Arratoon
—an Armenian Commander of Mir Kasim's forces 161
Asaf Jah 592
founder of the Nizam dynasty 229
Asaph Jah (Nazim-ul-Mulk)
see Nazim-ul-Mulk 237
Ashta Pradhan
eight members of Shivaji's council of administration 207
Asirgarh, hill-fortress of—
surrender and end of the last Maratha War 728
Assaye, Battle of 431, 456, 461
British loss in 463
—newspaper comments on 465-67
—and traitors in the camp of Sindhia 468

Page
Auckland, Lord
—administration of 809-29
and the Afgan War 811
—arrival as Governor-General 812
cause of his unpopularity 824
—his search for "Scientific frontier" 810
violates the treaty with the Sindh Amirs 817
Aurangzeb 21, 133, 204
acknowledges the magnanimity of Shivaji 208
—his death 208
prohibits saltpetre trade 57
Auber, Peter 33
Ruin of Indian Trade and Industries 284
Ava, King of 752
Azum-ul-dowlah 348
suspected of intriguing with the Marathas 743
Azim-us-shan
—his *farman* to the Danes 21
Azim Jah
not granted the title of Nawab of Carnatic 940
Azim-ul-Omra
Minister of the Nizam 316

Babar (or Babur) 129,204
Bacon 5
Badrud-din Ahmad, Maulvi 151
Bailie, Major 636
—Resident at Nawab of Oudh's Court 729
Baird, Sir David 354
—his claim to Governorship of Mysore 377
ill treated by Tipu 306
—removed to Cape of Good Hope 356
Baji Rao, Peshwa, 289, 361, 400, 494, 698, 699, 700, 929, 930
—and Pratap Singh 694
—and Dowlat Rao Sindhia 380
—fruitless intrigues 381
—his animosity against Nana 295
—appeal to the Raja of Berar and to Dowlat Rao Sindhia 415
—gets the province of Malwa from the Mughal Emperor 258
correspondance with Raja Jai Singh 661
dies at Bithoor 699
his elevation to the Peshwaship 294
approached by Nizam-ul Mulk to invade Malwa and Gujerat 257
negotiations with Arthur Wellesley 399
obliged to sign the Treaty of Puna 693
his retreat from Puna 696
invites Sindhia and the Raja of Berar 414
sends *khillut* to the Raja of Nagpur 708
treatment by Col. Palmer and Col. Close 437-38
treaty of Bassein 409
treaty of Puna 694
Baker, Lieutenant-Colonel
his remarks on European troops in India 759
Balabhadra Singh, Captain
—his defence of the Doon 641-42
639
Balaji Baji Rao 210
his death 211
Balaji Kunjar
—his exposure of Resident's treachary 468
letter to General Wellesley 468
—instigates the Pindaris 658

Page
Balaji Vishwanath, Peshwa 229
Balaji Pant Natu
—early carreer 691
—intrigues under Elphinstone 691
Balamain, Captain 758
Bala Saheb
son of Raghuji Bhonsla 703
(See Parsaji) 449
Bambu Khan
intrigues with the English 450
Baptiste, Jean 449
arrested by Sindhia 543
Bapu Ganesh Gokhale
his negotiation with Wellesley 397
death of 697
Peshwa's Commander-in-chief 695
Bapuji Sindhia 523, 539
Baring, Sir Francis 285
Baring, Mr. J.
—presents the petition of the East India Company 962
Baroach, fort of
Wellesley's instructions regarding seige of 477
Barlow, Hon'ble Mr., 420-21, 582, 583,595
abolishes "Tent Contract" 622
his administration 577-83
becomes Governor-General 579
Mutiny at Vellore 14
—policy regarding the Indian princes 656
his policy and the increase of the Pindaris 658
instigates the Pindaris 597
superseded by Minto 586
wants war on the Marathas 427
Baroda, Gaikwar of
and the Maratha Confederacy 289
Barrackpore Massacre, the 756
Barrows, Dr. Henry 12
Bassein, Treaty of 390, 309, 689
alarm of the Maratha Confederates 418
as cause of the Second Maratha War 673
—and Peshwa's claim in conquests 459
Bayley, Mr. W. B.
takes charge of the Government 772
Beames, Mr.
British in Orissa 481
Beatson, Colonel
—his "View of the origin of the War with Tipu" 323
Begum Samru
intrigue of the British 464
Bell, Major Evans 7
denounces the spoliation of Tanjore 940
exposes Dalhousie's proclamation 911-12
on Wallajah and Tipu 347
on Chatar Singh and Abbott 900
Bentinck's letter to the Raja of Mysore 778-79
on Right of Adoption 933
on Dalhousie's minute 937-38
Benfield, Paul 298
Bengal, Economic condition of 192
Bengal, Great Famine of 1770 281
Bengal, Nawab of
parwana to the Danes 21
Bengal, Revolution of 139
Bengal, the Second Revolution 117
Bentinck, Lord William 584, 585-86, 773, 786, 804
—and Auckland's appointment 810
—and the liberty of the Press 793

Page
—and the embassy of King of Delhi to England 781
—annexes the province of Coorg 778
—annexes Kachar 778
—applies for Governor-Generalship of India 773
—his conspiracy to subvert the Sikh Raj 788
interferes in Jeypore 779
interference with Jhansi 783
introduces English as Court language in India 791
plot against Gwalior 781
prohibits *Suttee* by Law 792
recalled 586
recalled from the Governorship of Madras 773
resumes rent-free lands 790
his scheme of navigation of the Indus 783-86
the scheme and the First Afgan War 810
his unwillingness to treaty with Ranjit Singh 789
—visit to Oudh 780
war with Kurg 775
Berar
—confiscation of 942
Berar Raja of
letter to the Prime Minister of the Nizam 414-15
plan for the union of Sindhia and Holkar 415
Subsidiary Alliance pressed on 599
suspected of meditating war on the English 541
Bernier
Dutch establishment in Bengal 23
Best, Captain Thomas
attack on the Portuguese 24
Beveridge, Mr. H.
his account of Plassey 93
on Mir Madan 94
on repetition of Black Hole at Amritsar 61
Bhagirath Rao 842
Bhairowal Treaty 908
—violation by the British Resident 901
Bhandarkar, Sir R. G.
—origin of the term Maratha 203
Bharatpur
—reduction of, 767
—unsuccessful seige of, 502
siege of 552-567
Bharatpur, Raja of
his submission to the English 547
joins Holkar 554
overtures by the English 564
refuses terms of the English 557
Bhils 526
Bhola Nath Chunder,
—on the Black Hole Tragedy 58
Bhonsle 210
Bilaspur, Raja of
intrigues with English 645
Birbhum Raj
gives trouble to Burdwan 131
Bird, Major 335
on Sir John Shore and Sadat Ali 301
spoliation of Oudh 299
Birdwood, Sir George
India and England 625
Bitowrah, Battle at 299

Page
Black Hole Tragedy
blame fixed on' Shiraj 99
English writers account 58
—a myth 62
no mention in the letters of Europeans 67
Blochmann Terranean's suicide 84
Bolts
criticises the doings of the English 193
Bombay Government
and French influence at Puna Court 221-22
—Raghoba 214
—the treaty of Purandhara 220-21
asks Goddard to leave Gujarat 233
sends proposal of treaty to the Puna Ministrys 220
sends Mr. Mostyn as envoy to Puna 212
Bombay troops
—defeat and retreat to Bombay 228
Boo Ali Khan
Mir Kasim's brother or cousin 166
Borguin, M. Louis
takes command of Sindhia's troops at Delhi 494
Boughton, Mr., cures Jahanara 25
Bowring 243
on British policy in Kurg 777
Bradshaw, Major
as British political Agent 649
disputes between Nepal and the British 634
Briggs, General 797
Briggs, Colonel
on the downfall of the Mughal Empire 254
Briggs, Lieut.-General
on the Peshwa's fidelity 690
Bright, John 962
on Macaulay's Bill of 1833 806
"British friend of India," The 853
Broadfoot, Major 878
his death of intrigues at the Lahore Darbar 870
replaces Colonel Richmond at Ludhiana 866
Brajendranath Banerji 60, 134, 181, 234
account of Begam Samru 447
on the last days of Mir Kasim 164
British
retreat from Afghanistan 822
Brooke, Captain
envoy to Hydar 244
Broome 160
on Mir Kasim's Troops 158
Bruce
Annals of East India Company 24
Bryce 9
Brydon, Dr.
only survivor 822
Buchanan, Revd. Claudius
on the college of Fort William 310
Buckingham, Mr. J. S.
deported 738
Buddha 57
Budge Budge
capture of the Fort at 68
Buist, Dr.
on Dewan Mulraj and the British 891
Bundelkhand
and the Treaty of Bassein 488
critical situation of the English 518
Bundelkhand, Raja of
tries to assert independence 172
Bundoola, Maha Mengyee 755

Page
Commander of the King of Ava 753
Burdwan Raj, battle with 132
Burhanpur
fall of 471
Burke, Edmund 234, 285, 336, 348-49, 721, 804, 927
on the British when they landed in India 448
his condemnation of the Inland trade 143
Impeachment of Hastings 13, 196
his objection to Shores appointment 300
on John Cartier 192
Burma
Invasion by East India Company 739
Envoy sent to Calcutta 740
Burma, King of
ready to accede to all the demands 918
Burmese 752-53
annexation of Assam 745
losses through Kingberring 741
occupy Shahpuri 746
reject conditions of the British 765
Burmese War 766
and unpopularity of Amherst 771
—the termination of 764
Burmese war, the First
its causes and circumstances 739
Burmese war, the Second 914, 925
a wanton outrage 913
Burn, Colonel
detached to pursue Holkar 552
Burnes, Lieutenant, Sir Alexander 5, 814
interview with King William the Fourth 811
murder of 821
attempts an alliance with the Afgans 813
departure from Kabul 815
proceeds to Kabul at the head of the "Commercial Mission" 812
Burton, Sir Richard
on 'secret service money in India' 839
Bussy, M. 135
Buxar, Battle of
Shuja defeated 177

Cabral, Pedro Alvarez 19
Caillaud, Colonel 112, 122, 125
his part in assassination of Miran 116
conspires against the Nawab 119
extorts money from Mir Kasim 126
marches against Kadam Husein 113
his treachery against Mir Jafar 124
Caird, Principal
on Reliability of private correspondence of Europeans 5
Calcutta, capture of 56
re-capture by the English 68
Campbell, Lieut.-Colonel
takes command in Madras Army 458
Campbell, General, Sir Archibald 751
Canning, Captain 741, 742
as envoy to the Court of Ava 739
Canning, Mr. George
declines Governor-Generalship of India 738
Canning, Lord
succeeds Dalhousie 952
the Queen's Proclamation 976
Canora, Colonel 899
Cardano 14

Page
Carey, W. H. 21
Carlton, Colonel G.
the field of Assaye 466-67
Carnac, Colonel
dismissed 227
his expedition against Nana 225
as President of Field Committee 229
retreat of the English 226
surprises Sindhia by sudden attack 234
Carnac, General 189
receives Shuja 179
joined by Clive at Benares 185
Carnac Major 146, 177
• in command of the British troops 174
declines Dewani of Bengal, Behar and Orissa 136
refuses to deliver Ram Narain to the Nawab 138
succeeds Colonel Caillaud in Bengal 129
superseded by Colonel Coote 138
Carnatic, Annexation of 347
Carnatic, Nawab of
commissions Sir John Macpherson to England 262
his case in the Parliament 348
Carpenter, Lieut.-Colonel
intrigues with the hill tribes 642
Carpenter, Major
on innocence of Pratap Sing 885
Cass, General
his speech on Burmese War 926
Castlereagh, Lord 436, 496
letter regarding Indian debt 426
Catherine of
Braganza 26
Cartier
succeeds Verelst 192
Cavendish, Mr.
removed from Gwalior 782
Cavour 205
Chandernagar, capture of 73
Chandernagar, fall of 84
Charnock, Job 40
Chand Saheb
taken prisoner by Marathas 29
Charles II 12
grants Company political power 26
Charter Act of 1833 790-91, 796, 798, 804
Charter Act of 1813
permission to Europeans to colonize 630
Charter Act of 1853
renewal of 950
Charter of the East India Company
renewed in 1813 628
Charter Act of 1793
provision of 797
Charter, Company's
the renewal for the last time 962
Chatar Singh, Sirdar
Captain Abbott's behaviour to 988
· Sikh Sirdars join him against the English 905
Checon 123
Cherry, Mr.
killed by Vazir Ali 335
Chesson, Mr. F. W. 913-14
Chew, Mr.
taken prisoner to Arrakan 748
China
invasion of 61

Page
Chin-Kilich Khan
First Nizam-ul-Mulk 256
Chitu
tragic death of 667
Chunar, fortress of
besiegd by the English 179
Clarke, Sir Alured
commander-in-chief 378
succeeds Lake 394
Clerk, Sir George
on Bentinck's instruction to the Resident at Indore 783
Cleveland, John 68
Clive, Robert
and the Dewany of Orissa 481
asked to go out to India 181
at Plassey with troops 93
attacked by Manik Chand 67
commences march on Chandernagar 83
death of Najm-ud-daula attributed to his foul play 189
declines the post of Dewan 112
on deputation to the Nawab 74
Dewany of Bengal, Behar and Orissa 186
makes no mention of Black Hole 59
his forgery 49
impeachment and suicide 191
implicated in the assassination of Shiraj 99
last days in India 190
his letter to the Nawab demanding French factories 86
his letter to Shiraj-ud-daula 87
Nawab's letter regarding placing troops at Hugly 82
obtained the Dewany of Bengal 976
his reasons for placing Arthur Wellesley at the command 400
recapture of Calcutta 68
resigns and sails 111
—and stability of the East India Company 188
his threatening letter to the Nawab 66
two treaties with Mir Jafar 91
victory at Plassey 50
volunteers to command expedition to Bengal 64
his displeasure at Watson's attitude 81
Close, Sir Barry
and Khorshedji Jamshedji Modi 677
and the Holkar 393
and the Peshwa 391-92
his opinion about Baji Rao 676
letter to the 'Secret Committee of the Court of Directors' 407-08
as Resident at Puna 382
on sincerity of Peshwa 671
admits Sindhia as an independent prince 841
Cobden, Mr.
on General Cass' speech about the Burmese War 926
his scathing exposure of the Second Burmese War 913
Colbert, Minister
as organiser of French Company 27
Colebrooke, Mr. J. E.
behaviour of the English 202
on Elphinstone's failure in Afganistan 674
success in Berar 386
on justice in India 207

Page
Colchester, Lord
on Lord Ellenborough 825
Collins, Colonel
and Sindhia 384
disrespectful memorial to Sindhia 424-25
insults Sindhia 450
leaves Sindhia's camp 434
memorials to Sindhia and Raja of Berar 432-33
remains with Sindhia 410
Resident at Sindhia's Court 367
fails to force Subsidiary Alliance on Sindhia 409
Columbus 17,18,22
Colvin 74
Combermere, Lord
reduces Bharatpur 767
Commercial Mission
and Dost Muhammad 812
Congress, Indian National
--prayer for the separation of judicial executive 790
Conolly, Lieut.-John
letter to Mohan Lul instructing him to bribe the Afghan chiefs 819-20
Cooke, Mr. John 55
Cooper, Mr.
his account of the tragedy of Amritsar 61
Coote, Captain
capture of Budge Budge Fort 63
proceeds to the frontiers of Oudh 103
protects Ram Narain 138
—sent to Madras 247
follows the French 102
Cornwallis, Lord 14
administration of 265, 283
—and Indian Rulers 267
—and separation of Sindhia from Holkar 577
and the result of his judicial reforms. 590
and Tipu 323
anarchy in India during his time 280
as a civil ruler 276
death at Ghazipur 576
declines Sindhia's offer against Tipu 290
despatches Captain Kennaway to Nizam 268
his achievements in India 282-83
his second Indian administration 572-76
judicial reforms 279
new Treaty with Nawab-Vazir of Oudh 342
sent to India as Governor- General 570
Permanent Settlement in Bengal 280
Public Services Reforms in India 277
—and the "Sale Law" 282
Treaty with Muhammad Ali 299
forms triple alliance with the Marathas and Nizam against Tipu 272
Cortez 96
Cotton, Sir Henry
Indian Unity 12
Cotton, Sir Evan 163
Council at Calcutta
forces new treaty on Najm-ud-daula 181
Court of Directors
and the Native States 928
and the appointment of Law Member 804
disapprove measures against the Nawab 170
criticises Wellesley's policy 569
and the violation of orders by Company's servants. 195

Page
Cox, Captain
and Cox's Bazar 740
Cumberland, Duke of 959
Cunningham, Captain
on the bravery of the Sikh soldiers 880
his reflections on causes of the first Sikh War 857
on the so-called first "serious violation of the frontier" by the Lahore Darbar 868
on the motive of the English in preventing Ranjit Sing from acquiring Sindh 787
on Ranjit's conduct towards the English 614
on shameless treason of Gulab Singh 879
exposes Broadfoot 867
becomes a victim or for his truthful account 7
A History of the Sikhs 5
Cunningham, Pater
on the reliability of State papers 5
Currie, Mr.
his arrangements for annexing Panjab 869-70
assists Dalhousie in preparing proclamation annexing the Panjab 912
his conversation with General Ventura 873
his letter regarding Canora 899
prevails on the Lahore Darbar to induce Mulraj to resign 893
on the suppression of the mutiny 958
and the removal of Rani Jhinda 896
the Second Sikh War 889
succeeds Lawrence at Lahore 892
Curzon, Lord 944
Cutch, Treaty with 653
Czar
letter to Dost Muhammad seeking alliance 814

Dada Khasjeewalla 844-46
the malicious charges against 487
De Souza, Alfonzo, 21
Dalhousie, Lord 8, 566-67, 886, 934, 949
doctrine of lapse 778
and the kingdom of Oudh and the Nizam 942
—and Satara 931
—and Sir Salar Jung 944
annexation of Jhansi 937
—of Oudh 945
—of the Panjab 911
declares Rajaship of Nagpur as extinct 228
deputes Sleeman to Oudh 946
despatches Commodore Lambert to Burma 915
justifies war with Burma 913
other annexations 940
proclamation re. Sikh Raj 910
war with the Burmese 924
Dalip Singh 865
disputed parentage of 870
possessions on the left bank of the Satlaj declared annexed 875
reduced to a feudatory prince 901
Damnaji Gaekwar
founder of the dynasty 217
Danes in India 21
Danglia, Trimbakji
assassination of Shastri 684
confined in Chunar fort 693
his escape 692
tries reconciliation between Shastri and Peshwa [illegible]

	Page
Smith, General	166
pursued Amir Khan	560
Smith, Revd. Sydney	585
Smith, Mr. Vernon	
and Ellenborough	831
Snodgrass, Major	752, 764
Soctwan	
Danish Governor	21
Somro—(Sombre)	
execution of English prisoners	163
Spencer, Herbert	389, 584
acting governor	181
on British administration of India	954
Spiers, Colonel	845
Srinivasachari, Professor C. S.	
account of Dubois	586
Stavorinus	
the English at Surat	358
St. George, Fort of	45
Stead, W. T.	
and the drafting of the Proclamation	973
Stead, Mr. William	
on General Lake	493
Stephen, Sir James	
on the Queen's Proclamation	972
Stevenson, Colonel	
commanding the Nizam's subsidiary force	457
pursued Sindhia	468
under Wellesley	402
Stewart	89
Stibbert, Colonel	
letter from Mir Kasim	165
Strachey, Mr. Justice	
Tilak's trial	8
Strachery, Sir Henry,	
increase of dacoities dnring British period	590
Stuart General	
conversations with Gokhale's Vakil	400
instructions to Wellesley	402
orders the Commander-in-chief of Madras to assist Wellesley	457
Subidiary Alliance	
the diplomatic game	316
Sullivan, Mr.	
questioning the validity of Lake's *ikrar namah*	447
Sumner, William Brightwell	
conspiracy against the Nawab	119
Sundar Chand	
and Ranjit Singh	637
Surajmal, Raja	
of Bharatpur	532
Surat, annexation of	358-60
Sutherland, Major	
succeeds Cavendish at Gwalior	782
Swartz, Revd. Mr.	353
Sydenham	
his account of Sindhia's force	464
Sykes, Lieut.-Colonel P. M.	
Medhi Ali Khan's deed in Persia	617
Taimur	27, 77, 129
Taky-Khan, Mahomed	150
his death	157
Talleyrand	78
Talneir	
surrender of	728

	Page
Tanjore, annexation of	351-57
Tanjore, Raja of	
first treaty with the Company	352
Tayler, Mr. William	219
Teignmouth, Lord	337
Tej Singh	
commanding the Sikh forces	865
Temple, Sir Richard	
the policy of Dalhousie	936
Tent Contract	622
Theobald, Mr. W.	
and Macaulay's Penal Code	805
Thanes	16
Thomas, George	
and the Sikhs	453
on conquest of the Panjab	608
Thompson, George	
and the claims of the Delhi family	446
Thorne, Robert	24
Thornton	84, 274
on Bentinck	774
Tilak, Bal Gangadhar	372
Tilakchand, Raja	46
driven to revolt	131
Tipu	619
alleged embassy to Mauritius	329
and the treaty of 1792	326
defeated	274
his dominion partitioned	333
jubilation over his death	332-33
the Second War, with—	323
success against the English	250
war with the Marathas and the Nizam	269
Tod, Colonel James	
employment in Rajputana	660-61
Tooke, William	
Shiraj-ud-daula's Nawabship	47
Torrens, W. M.	
on administration of Warren Hastings	202
on Hastings	737
Trimbuck, fortress of	727
Trinity of British Christian nobles	624
Tripartite Treaty	
and Lord Ellenborough	828
Triple Alliance	
between the Nizam, the Peshwa and the Company	315
Trotter, Captain	904
Tukaji Holkar	288
Tuljajee, Raja	
adopted Sarboji which was considered invalid	358
Tulsibai	
nominal authority	593
Turkey, Sultan of	
letter to Aurangzeb	57
Turton, Sir T.	
importance of the proceedings against Wellesley	338
Tyndall	
on "Historical research"	
Udhua Nala	
capture by the English	161
Upton, Colonel	
fails in his mission	220
recalled to Bengal	221

Page
Uzir-ud-Dowla
raised to the *masnad* of Murshidabad 286

Valentia, Lord 93,671
Vansittart, Henry 112
base treachery 124
Governor of Bengal 118
removes Carnac and Coote from Patna 138
resigned and left 181
sent to Patna 143
vainly pleads for the Nawab 147
Vansittart, Captain
heroism of Balabhadra 641
Vasco Da Gama
Portuguese discoverer of the sea-route to India 17
Vazir Ali
escapes from Benares 335
Venkoji 351
Ventura, General 854
Verelst
cause of war with Mir Kasim 141
drain of silver from India 193
succeeded Clive 192
Vellore, Mutiny of 14
Vickovich, Captain 814
Viswas Row 135

Wajed Coja 79
Wallace, Colonel
advances against Holkar 549
insecure position of Gangadhar Shastri 683
Wellesley, Arthur 421
advises treachery with Peshwa 672
and Gokhale 400
and the Patwardhan family 397
fortune made at Seringapatam 333
Governor of Mysore 377
instructions to Elphinstone to intrigue 673
memorandum upon operations against the Marathas 401
secretly instructed to march on to Puna 393
—and the Holkar 440
and the Peshwa 458
and the Peshwa's ministers 460
and the Raja of Berar 473
battle of Argaum 476
declared war on the Marathas 456
directed to invade Holkar's territories 509
hands over command to Wallace 512
letters to Balaji Kunjar and Muhammad Mir Khan 473
march from Hurrypur against Dhoondhia Waugh 403
memorandum on the Battle of Assaye 461
operation in Guzerat against Sindhia 477
preparations for the War 411
Wellesley, Henry
Lieutenant-Governor of the Ceded Provinces 341
Wellesley, Marquess
account of his administration 14
and Baji Rao 363
and Colonel Palmer 364

Page
and Dolcha Sing 544
and General Harris 317
and his treatment of the Raja of Berar 547-48
and Sultan's Vakeel at Puna 373
and the Charter Act of 1793 629
and the College at Fort William, Calcutta 584
and the destruction of Sindhia and Berar 498
and the Mughal Emperor 444
and the Nawab of Arcot 343-50
and the Nawab of Farrukhabad 342
and the terms of the treaty with the Nizam 321
appointed Elphinstone as an assistant to the Resident at Puna 673
arrangement with respect to the Jagir of Begam Samru 447
authorises Lake to arrest Fawcett 519
authorises Seton and Smith to offer Jaghir to Amir Khan 562
conspiracy against Tipu 315
declaration of war against Tipu 325
dissension between Amrut Rao and the Holkar 403
Embassy to Berar 378
endeavour to screen Monson 529
formally declared war against Tipu 330
his knowledge of Baji Rao's character 398
his plan of campaign against Holkar 542
his policy regarding the Marathas 395
his policy with the Sikhs 453
his treatment of the Nizam 311
hostile intentions against Holkar 506
how he ensnared the Peshwa 361-90
injustice to Gwalior 513-14
intentions against the Nawab of Oudh 337
left India for good 569
letter to Emperor Shah Alam 445
letter to the "secret Committee of the Court of Directors" 545
letters to Raja of Berar and to Dowlat Rao Sindhia 415
negotiations with the Raja of Berar 386
Peshwa's binding to the Treaty of Bassein 408
proclamation of reward for desertion 454
recalled 588
replaces Palmer by Kirkpatrick 382
"secret official" letter to Lake 557
settlement of dispute with Sindhia 568
succeeds in detaching the Peshwa from Sindhia 371
treaty with Nasir-ud-din 359
—wantes to remove Sindhia from Puna 366
Waszitt, Cozee 46
Watson 68,80
Watson, Admiral
arrival at Chandernagar 84
Destruction of indigenous navy in 1756 A. D. 37
letter from the Nawab 70
refuses to deceive Amir Chand 91
reply to Nawab's letter 78
Watts 92
appointed British envoy 74
demands complied with by Shiraj 85

	Page
Mir Jafar's scheme to overthrow the Nawab	90
Surrender of the Kasimbazar factory	51, 75
to attack Chandernagar	76
Webbe, Mr. Josia	
Resident at Sindhia's Court	537
Tipu's real statesman ship	326
Welsh, Colonel James	
and the real cause of the war against Sindhia	412-13
Wheeler, Talboys	
Hastings and bribery	201
White Captain	
march on Burdwan	132
Wilson, Dr.	59
Wilson, Revd. Dr.	
his conduct	357
Wilson, H. H	
character of the Pindaris	667
death of Gillespie and the cowardice of the British troops	640
protection of British textiles by imposing heavy duty on Indian goods	625-26
Windham, Mr.	350
Withoji	
a fugitive at Kolhapore	386
Wood, Sir Charles	
Dalhousie's classification of Native States	927-28
Woodington, Colonel	
capture of Baroach	479
fall of Powanghur	480
Yar Lutf Khan	
proposed by the Seths to the throne	89
Yashvantrav Ghorepade	
friendly with Elphinstone	692
Yellow ship	
seizure of	921
Yeshwunt Rao Aher Rao	932
Yessoda Bai	
suggested adoption of a son	295
Yorke, Major	
took possession of Nagur	132
Young, Mr. John	
the Chief of the Prussian factory	38
Zaman Shah	617
his downfall	602
Zamorin	19
Zein-ul-Abudin	
corruption in the Moslem army	175
Zuman Shah	
rumour of his invading India	366-67